Fundamentals of Modern Belarusian

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While living in several former republics of the USSR, I learned to speak Russian, the *lingua franca* of CIS countries. Russian is spoken by the majority of adults in the CIS, and has served me well wherever I have traveled in the former Soviet Union. Russian is the dominant language in Belarus. Nevertheless, Belarusian still holds a prominent position in Belarusian society as a symbol of Belarusian identity and nationalism. Many government documents are printed only in Belarusian and most street signs are in Belarusian. Every schoolchild is required to learn the language, and almost all Belarusians can speak it at least to some extent. A knowledge of Belarusian is valuable to anyone who spends any amount of time in Belarus.

This book was written with the assumption that the reader is already moderately familiar with either Russian or Ukrainian. Little explanation is given of noun gender and cases, or verb aspect and tenses. The reader should consult either a Russian or Ukrainian grammar for more details on these principles. I have attempted, in this book, to thoroughly describe those parts of Belarusian grammar that differ from Russian or Ukrainian.

There is great variation in the Belarusian language from region to region, and any attempt to make an authoritative description of the Belarusian language will be plagued by this fact. I have strived to make this work as consistent as possible with the standard Belarusian used in most literature. To this end, I have set forth the most common declensions, conjugations, and vocabulary.

To my comrades of the Vitebskaya Banda

Chapter 1

Spelling Rules

It is important to understand Belarusian spelling. It is quite complex and more difficult than Russian. Most of the complexity of Belarusian morphology is a result of spelling rules. This problem is aggravated by the competition between two existing sets of spelling rules, hereafter referred to as the Phonetic and Official orthographies. I have chosen the Official orthography for this work since it has more acceptance. I have noted in this chapter those ways in which the Phonetic differs from the Official orthography.

1.1 Vowels

Belarusian has 10 letters which represent vowel sounds. They can be divided into two categories, non-iotized vowels, and their iotized counterparts. The letters in the second column represent the same sounds as the vowels in the first, except they have an initial “y” sound.

а	я
о	ё
у	ю
ы	і
э	е

1.2 Invariably Hard Consonants

The letters **д**, **ж**, **р**, **т**, **ч**, and **ш** are always hard, they are never followed by any letter from the second column. In a situation where a word’s morphology would normally place an iotized vowel after a **д** or a **т**, those consonants are changed to **дз** or **ц** respectively. In a situation where an iotized vowel would normally follow a **ж**, **р**, **ч**, or **ш**, that vowel is changed to its non-iotized counterpart. The consonants **г**, **к**, **х** are never followed by the letter **ы**. In a situation where an **ы** would normally occur, it is changed to an **і** if following one of these three letters.

бяда	*misery*	у бядзе	*in misery*
гара	*mountain*	на гары	*on the mountain*
мяжа	*boundary*	на мяжы	*on the boundary*
пірог	*pastry*	пірагі	*pastries*
растуць	*they grow*	расце	*it grows*

1.3 Impossibility of unstressed **о**, **э**, or **ё**

The letters **о**, **э**, and **ё** only exist when stressed. When unstressed, the letters **о** and **э** change to **а**. The letter **ё** usually changes to a **е**, but sometimes it also changes to a **я**. See 1.4 for more details on spelling rules that effect **е**. Care must be taken when stress shifts to a different syllable.

Sing.	Pl.	
вол	валы	*ox*
сасна	сосны	*pine tree*
стол	сталы	*table*

There are exceptions, all of which are loan words.

радыё	*radio*
тэлевізар	*television*
эканоміка	*economy*

1.4 Conversion of **е** to other vowels

Any **е** or **ё**, which immediately precedes the accent, is changed to **а**.

адзець	*to dress*(per.)	адзяваць	*to dress*(imp.)
вецер	*wind*	вятры	*winds*

Most exceptions to this are foreign words

бензін	*gasoline*
сезон	*season*
семнаццаць	*seventeen*
электрон	*electron*

1.5 Conversion of **о** to **ы**

In words with the accent on the last syllable, it is common for a preceding syllable –**ро**- to change to –**ры**-.

бровы	*eyebrows*	брыво	*eyebrow*
гром	*thunder*	грымець	*to rumble*
кроў	*blood*	крыві	*of blood*

1.6 The apostrophe

In Belarusian, this letter fills the function of the Russian letter **ъ.** It only occurs following a consonant, and preceding an iotized vowel. Having no sound of its own, its function is to separate the sound of the vowel following it from the consonant preceding it. This is either to prevent the consonant from being softened, or to conform to spelling rules because the preceding consonant is invariably hard.

аб'явіць	*to declare*
п'яны	*intoxicated*
сур'ёзны	*serious*

1.7 Assimilation

Belarusian de-voices its consonants exactly like Russian. Voiced consonants followed by unvoiced consonants are pronounced as unvoiced. Unvoiced consonants followed by voiced consonants are pronounced voiced. Consonants at the end of words are pronounced as unvoiced. These rules are not completely reliable. Belarusians seem to be inconsistent in following them.

Belarusian has assimilation with respect to softness. If a consonant is soft, an immediately preceding consonant is also softened, provided it is one of the eligible consonants. Only the consonants **дз**, **з**, **л**, **н**, **с**, and **ц** are eligible to be softened in this way. In the Phonetic orthography, a **ь** is placed between the two softened consonants. For the purposes of both assimilation and pronunciation, the letter combination **дз** is treated as a single letter. The consonants **б**, **в**, **м**, and **ф** are not softened this way, but if they are followed by an iotized vowel, consonants that precede it can be softened by assimilation. The invariably hard consonants cannot be softened this way, and will prevent those consonants preceding them from being softened by assimilation.

Phonetic	Official	
дзьвери	дзвери	*door*
ёсьць	ёсць	*there is*
песьня	песня	*song*

1.8 Rules for **в**, **у**, and **ў**

If the letter **у** occurs after a vowel, even if the vowel ends the previous word, it is written as an **ў.** This letter is pronounced like the English ‘w’.

Пайшлі ў хлеў.	*She went into the shed.*
Стаіць у хляве	*She is standing in the shed.*
Гэты хлеб увесь.	*This is all the bread.*
Гэта ўсё, што ёсць.	*That’s all there is.*
Ўвайшлі яны ў хату.	*They went into the house.*
Я ўвайшоў у хату.	*He went into the house.*

The letter **в** cannot occur, unless it is immediately followed by a vowel, otherwise, it must change to a **ў.** The letter **ў** can precede iotized vowels, but is changed to a **в** if it precedes a non-iotized vowel. When preceding an iotized vowel, it is not always clear whether the consonant should be a **в** or an **ў.**

любоў	*love*	любоўю	*with love*
справа	*affair*	спраў	*of the affairs*
хлеў	*shed*	за хлявом	*behind the shed*
хлеў	*shed*	у хляве	*in the shed*

Words cannot begin with an **о.** Many words which would otherwise begin with an **о** instead have the letter **в** added to the beginning. If the **о** changes to an **а** due to an accent shift, the initial **в** often drops off.

возера	*lake*	азёры	*lakes*
вокны	*windows*	акно	*window*

Note these exceptions:

одум	*deep thought*	ордэн	*ceremonial order*
опера	*opera*	ордер	*warrant*
орган	*organ*		

Chapter 2

Noun Declension

Because of the complex nature of Belarusian spelling rules, I have attempted to give exhaustive examples of the different declensions. Most of the declensions are slight variations of one of the few basic declensions, differing only because of the manifestation of spelling rules. It should be noted that it is extremely common for a noun with accented endings in the singular to have unaccented endings in the plural, and vice-versa.

2.1 Masculine nouns ending in a hard consonant

Most masculine nouns with accented endings decline like стол, *table*.

	Sing.	Pl.
Nom.	стол	сталы
Acc.	стол	сталы
Gen.	стала	сталоў
Dat.	сталу	сталам
Instr.	сталом	сталамі
Prep.	на стале	на сталах

вугал	*corner*
лоб	*forehead*

Most masculine nouns with unaccented endings decline like план, *plan*.

Nom.	план	планы
Acc.	план	планы
Gen.	плана	планаў
Dat.	плану	планам
Instr.	планам	планамі
Prep.	у плане	у планах

аўтобус	*bus*
клас	*class*

Masculine nouns with accented endings in –**д** or –**т** decline like суд, *judgment*. The final consonant becomes either **ц** or **дз** for the prepositional singular.

	Sing.	Pl.
Nom.	суд	суды
Acc.	суд	суды
Gen.	суда	судоў
Dat.	суду	судам
Instr.	судом	судамі
Prep.	на судзе	на судах

куст	*bush*
ліст	*leaf*

Masculine nouns with accented endings in –**г**, -**к**, or –**х** decline like пірог, *pastry*.

Nom.	пірог	пірагі
Acc.	пірог	пірагі
Gen.	пірага	пірагоў
Dat.	пірагу	пірагам
Instr.	пірагом	пірагамі
Prep.	у пірагу	у пірагах

бок	*side*
мех	*sack*

Masculine nouns with unaccented endings in –**г**, -**к**, or –**х** decline like гук, *sound.*

Nom.	гук	гукі
Acc.	гук	гукі
Gen.	гуку	гукаў
Dat.	гуку	гукам
Instr.	гукам	гукамі
Prep.	у гуку	у гуках

луг	*meadow*
страх	*fear*

Masculine nouns with unaccented endings in **–д** or **–т** decline like погляд, *outlook*, decline like план, except the final consonant becomes **ц** or **дз** for the prepositional singular.

	Sing.	Pl.
Nom.	погляд	погляды
Acc.	погляд	погляды
Gen.	погляду	поглядаў
Dat.	погляду	поглядам
Instr.	поглядам	поглядамі
Prep.	у поглядзе	у поглядах

асфальт	*asphalt*

Masculine nouns with accented endings in –**ж**, -**р**, -**ц**, -**ч**, or –**ш** decline like двор, *yard*.

Nom.	двор	двары
Acc.	двор	двары
Gen.	двара	двароў
Dat.	двары	дварам
Instr.	дваром	дварамі
Prep.	на двары	на дварах

нож	*knife*
канец	*end*
мяч	*ball*
кош	*basket*

Masculine nouns with unaccented endings in –**ж**, -**р**, -**ц**, -**ч**, or –**ш** decline like катэдж, *cottage.*

Nom.	катэдж	катэджы
Acc.	катэдж	катэджы
Gen.	катэджа	катэджаў
Dat.	катэджу	катэджам
Instr.	катэджам	катэджамі
Prep.	у катэджы	у катэджах

ровар	*bicycle*
харч	*meat*
палец	*finger*
аркуш	*sheet of paper*

2.2 Masculine nouns ending in –**ь** or -**й**

Most nouns of this group with accented endings decline like пень, *stump*.

	Sing.	Pl.
Nom.	пень	пні
Acc.	пень	пні
Gen.	пня	пнёў
Dat.	пню	пням
Instr.	пнём	пнямі
Prep.	на пні	на пнях

агонь	*fire*
ручай	*stream*

Nouns of this group with unaccented endings decline like партфэль, *briefcase*.

Nom.	партфэль	партфэлі
Acc.	партфэль	партфэлі
Gen.	партфэля	партфэляў
Dat.	партфэлю	партфэлям
Instr.	партфэлем	партфэлямі
Prep.	у партфэлі	у партфэлях

аўтамабіль	*automobile*
гай	*grove*

2.3 Neuter nouns ending in –**о** or -**а**

Most neuter nouns ending in -**о** decline like крыло, *wing*.

Nom.	крыло	крылы
Acc.	крыло	крылы
Gen.	крыла	крылаў
Dat.	крылу	крылам
Instr.	крылом	крыламі
Prep.	крыле	крылах

акно	*window*
пісьмо	*letter*

Most neuter nouns ending in -**а** decline like кола, *wheel*.

	Sing.	Pl.
Nom.	кола	колы
Acc.	кола	колы
Gen.	кола	колаў
Dat.	колу	колам
Instr.	колам	коламі
Prep.	на коле	на колах

дрэва	*tree*

Neuter nouns ending with **д** or **т** as the final consonant decline like крыло or кола, except the final consonant becomes **ц** or **дз** respectively for the prepositional singular.

Nom.	Dat. & Prep.	
гняздо	гняздзе	*nest*
жыта	жыце	*rye*
лета	леце	*summer*

Neuter nouns ending in –**га**, -**ка**, or –**ха** decline like воблака, *cloud*.

Nom.	воблака	воблакі
Acc.	воблака	воблакі
Gen.	воблака	воблакаў
Dat.	воблаку	воблакам
Instr.	воблакам	воблакамі
Prep.	на воблаку	на воблаках

рэха	*echo*

Neuter nouns ending in –**жо**, -**ро**, -**цо**, -**чо**, or –**шо** decline like вядро, *bucket*.

Nom.	вядро	вёдры
Acc.	вядро	вёдры
Gen.	вядра	вёдроў
Dat.	вядру	вёдрам
Instr.	вядром	вёдрамі
Prep.	на вядры	на вёдрах

ружжо	*gun*
яйцо	*egg*
плячо	*shoulder*

Neuter nouns ending in –**жа**, -**ра**, -**ца**, -**ча**, or –**ша** decline like акенца, *small window*.

	Sing.	Pl.
Nom.	акенца	акенцы
Acc.	акенца	акенцы
Gen.	акенца	акенцаў
Dat.	акенцу	акенцам
Instr.	акенцам	акенцамі
Prep.	на акенцы	на акенцах

мора	*sea*
аблічча	*countenance*
падсрэшша	*eaves*

2.4 Neuter nouns ending in –**ё** or -**е**

Neuter nouns ending in –**ё** decline like жыццё, *life*.

	Sing.	Pl.
Nom.	жыццё	жыцці
Acc.	жыццё	жыцці
Gen.	жыцця	жыццяў
Dat.	жыццю	жыццям
Instr.	жыццём	жыццямі
Prep.	на жыцці	на жыццях

галлё	*piece of firewood*
пачуццё	*sense*

Neuter nouns ending in –**е** decline like пакаленне, *generation*.

Nom.	пакаленне	пакаленні
Acc.	пакаленне	пакаленні
Gen.	пакалення	пакаленняў
Dat.	пакаленню	пакаленням
Instr.	пакаленнем	пакаленнямі
Prep.	у пакаленні	у пакаленнях

выключэнне	*exception*

2.5 Neuter nouns ending in –**мя**

There are seven nouns of this group. They decline like стрэмя, *stirrup*. Many of these nouns have no plural form.

	Sing.	Pl.
Nom.	стрэмя	страмёны
Acc.	стрэмя	страмёны
Gen.	стрэмя	страмёнаў
Dat.	стрэмю	страмёнам
Instr.	стрэмем	страмёнамі
Prep.	аб стрэмі	аб страмёнах

бярэмя	*armful*
вымя	*udder*
племя	*tribe*
полымя	*flame*
сэмя	*seed*
цемя	*top of head*

2.6 Neuter nouns ending in –**я**

Nouns of this type decline like цяля, *calf*. All are animate and represent animal young.

Nom.	цяля	цяляты
Acc.	цяля	цялят
Gen.	цяляці	цялят
Dat.	цяляці	цялятах
Instr.	цялём	цялятамі
Prep.	аб цяляці	аб цялятах

парася	*piglet*
жарабя	*foal*

2.7 Feminine nouns ending in –**а**

Most nouns of this group with accented endings decline like сцяна, *wall*.

	Sing.	Pl.
Nom.	сцяна	сцены
Acc.	сцяну	сцены
Gen.	сцяны	сцен
Dat.	сцяне	сценам
Instr.	сцяной	сценамі
Prep.	на сцяне	на сценах

галава	*head*
сасна	*pine tree*

Most nouns of this group with unaccented endings decline like галіна, *branch*.

Nom.	галіна	галіны
Acc.	галіну	галіны
Gen.	галіны	галін
Dat.	галіне	галінам
Instr.	галінай	галінамі
Prep.	на галіне	на галінах

бульба	*potatoe*
крама	*store*

Nouns of this group with **д** or **т** as the final consonant decline like крыло or кола, except the final consonant becomes **ц** or **дз** respectively for the prepositional singular.

Nom. Sing.	Dat. & Prep.	
пліта	пліце	*slab*
хата	хаце	*home*
вада	вадзе	*water*
бяседа	бяседзе	*discussion*

Nouns of this group with the accented endings –**га**, –**ка**, or –**ха** decline like нага, *leg*. The ending changes to -**зе**, -**цэ**, or -**се** respectively, for the prepositional and dative singular.

	Sing.	Pl.
Nom.	нага	ногі
Acc.	нагу	ногі
Gen.	нагі	ног
Dat.	назе	нагам
Instr.	нагой	нагамі
Prep.	на назе	на нагах

Nom.	Prep. & Dat.	
страха	страсе	*roof*
рука	руцэ	*arm*

Nouns of this group with the unaccented endings –**га**, –**ка**, or –**ха** decline like дарога, *road*. The ending changes to -**зе**, -**цы**, or -**се** respectively, for the prepositional and dative singular.

Nom.	дарога	дарогі
Acc.	дарогу	дарогі
Gen.	дарогі	дарог
Dat.	дарозе	дарогах
Instr.	дарогай	дарогамі
Prep.	на дарозе	на дарогах

Nom.	Prep. & Dat.	
скруха	скрусе	*sadness*
зорка	зорцы	*star*

Nouns of this group with the accented endings –**жа**, -**ра**, -**ча**, -**ца** or –**ша** decline like мяжа, *boundary*.

	Sing.	Pl.
Nom.	мяжа	межы
Acc.	мяжу	межы
Gen.	мяжы	межаў
Dat.	мяжы	межам
Instr.	мяжой	межамі
Prep.	на мяжы	на межах

гара	*mountain*
каланча	*observation tower*
душа	*soul*

Nouns of this group with the unaccented endings –**жа**, -**ра**, -**ча**, -**ца** or –**ша** decline like мара, *dream*.

	Sing.	Pl.
Nom.	мара	мары
Acc.	мару	мары
Gen.	мары	мараў
Dat.	мары	марам
Instr.	марай	марамі
Prep.	на мары	на марах

вежа	*spire*
раніца	*morning*
ануча	*rag*
каша	*porridge*

2.8 Feminine nouns ending in –**я**

Nouns of this group with accented endings decline like зямля, *land*.

Nom.	зямля	землі
Acc.	зямлю	землі
Gen.	зямлі	земляў
Dat.	зямлі	землям
Instr.	зямлёй	землямі
Prep.	на зямлі	на землях

сям'я	*family*

Nouns of this group with unaccented endings decline like лінія, *line*.

Nom.	лінія	лініі
Acc.	лінію	лініі
Gen.	лініі	лініяў
Dat.	лініі	лініям
Instr.	лініяй	лініямі
Prep.	на лініі	на лініях

куля	*bullet*
партыя	*party*

2.9 Feminine nouns ending in –**ь** or consonant

There are a couple of points that must be noted for these nouns. If the final consonant is preceded by a vowel, it is doubled in the instrumental singular. If the genitive plural ending is accented, it will be –**ей** or –**эй**, otherwise it will be –**аў** or –**яў.**

Nouns of this group with the ending –**ь** decline like сувязь, *connection.*

	Sing.	Pl.
Nom.	сувязь	сувязі
Acc.	сувязь	сувязі
Gen.	сувязі	сувязяў
Dat.	сувязі	сувязям
Instr.	сувяззю	сувязямі
Prep.	на сувязі	на сувязях

радасць	*joy*
соль	*salt*

Nouns of this group with the endings –**ж**, -**р**, **ч**, or -**ш** decline like ноч, *night*.

Nom.	ноч	ночы
Acc.	ноч	ночы
Gen.	ночы	начэй
Dat.	ночы	начам
Instr.	ноччу	начамі
Prep.	у ночы	у начах

вупраж	*bridled horse*
мыш	*mouse*

Chapter 3

Additional Points on Noun Declension

3.1 Accusative form of animate nouns

The accusative form of plural animate nouns is identical the genitive, not the nominative case. Adjectives describing these nouns take the genitive ending.

Пастух збірае сваіх кароў.	*The herdsman gathers his cows.*
Туды дзяўчат пасылалі.	*That's where we sent the girls.*
Прасіў у яго, не за сябе, за двух маленькіх дзетак.	*I asked him, not for myself, but for two little kids.*

The accusative case is identical to the genitive for singular masculine animate nouns as well. Corresponding adjectives take the genitive ending.

Яна прыдбае новага мужа.	*She will get a new husband.*
Ён перажываў за старэйшага брата	*He was worried about his older brother.*
Паважанага пешахода ігнаруюць і прыгнятаюць пошлыя вадзіцелі.	*The respected pedestrian is ignored and oppressed by common drivers.*

3.2 Masculine genitive singular endings **а/я** versus **у/ю**

There are two groups of masculine nouns. One of these groups has genitive singular endings of **а** and **я**, the other group has genitive singular endings of **у**, and **ю.** There is no easy way to tell to which group any given noun belongs.

Nouns with the genitive singular endings -**а** or –**я** are typically words that can be described in English with the word "many." These nouns are often concrete, countable objects.

- Nouns denoting people, animals, and body parts
- Units of measurement and currency
- Geographical concepts

брата	*of the brother*	малатка	*of the hammer*
грама	*of the gram*	пальца	*of the finger*
дня	*of the day*	перашыйка	*of the isthmus*
кантынэнта	*of the continent*	рубля	*of the ruble*
каня	*of the horse*	чалавека	*of the person*

Nouns with the genitive singular endings –**у** or –**ю** are typically words that are used in the partitive sense. In other words, some portion of a whole is implied. Typically, such words represent more abstract ideas. They can usually be described in English with the word "much." If a word in English cannot have an article like "the" applied to it, it will have the –**у** or -**ю** genitive ending in Belarusian.

- Nouns that denote a group, gathering, or collection of other things
- Natural phenomena, characteristics, actions, and spatial directions
- Substances and other nouns that can be described in English by the word "much"

выгляду	*of the glance*	роду	*of the type*
дажджу	*of rain*	сну	*of sleep*
колеру	*of color*	усходу	*of the east*
набору	*of the collection*	холаду	*of the cold*
натоўпу	*of the crowd*	цукру	*of sugar*

3.3 Genitive plural endings

It is often very difficult to predict the genitive plural endings of nouns. The genitive plural form must be memorized for every feminine noun, and for masculine nouns ending in –**ь.**

Feminine nouns ending in –**а** or -**я** are the most problematic.

вежа	вежаў	*of the spires*	зямля	земляў	*of the lands*
галава	галоў	*of the heads*	крама	крамаў	*of the shops*
галіна	галін	*of the branches*	лінія	ліній	*of the lines*
зорка	зорак	*of the stars*	сям'я	сем'яў	*of the families*

Masculine nouns ending in –**ь** also have this issue.

госць	гасцей	*of the guests*	локаць	локцяў	*of the elbows*
конь	коней	*of the horses*	пень	пнёў	*of the stumps*

Some nouns can have either ending.

мяжа	меж or межаў	*of the boundaries*
сасна	сосен or соснаў	*of the pine-trees*
хата	хат or хатаў	*of the cottages*

3.4 Irregular prepositional endings

Many maculine and neuter nouns with unaccented endings whose final consonant **г** or **х**, have irregular prepositional singular endings. The final consonant morphs into **з** or **с** respectively.

бераг	на беразе	*on the shore*
верх	на версе	*on top*
кажух	у кажусе*	*in the leather jacket*
луг	на лузе	*in the field*
начлег	на начлезе	*in the lodgings*
парог	на парозе	*at the threshold*
снег	на снезе	*on the snow*
стог	на стозе	*on the haystack*

*The form у кажуху is equally common.

The following masculine and neuter nouns have irregular prepositional forms.

брат	аб брату	*about the brother*
горб	на гарбу	*on the hump*
меч	на мячы	*on the sword*
пост	на пасту	*at the watch-post*
ход	на хаду	*in motion*
гняздо	у гняздзе	*in the nest*
малако	у малацэ	*in milk*
рэха	у рэсе	*in the echo*

3.5 Feminine Instrumental Ending Variation

There exists a variation of the instrumental ending for feminine nouns ending in –**а** or –**я**. This alternate ending is created by replacing the final -**й** with a -**ю**. This variation is common, but is non-standard and should be avoided by the non-native speaker. This variation extends to adjectives and pronouns as well.

Бабуля толькі галавою паківала.	*The old lady just shook her head.*
Я пайду з табою разам.	*I will go together with you.*
З пэўнаю перасцярогаю ў душы, Бураў пераступіў і другі парог.	*With definite caution in his soul, Burau crossed the second doorway also.*

3.6 Gender and declension disagreement

Masculine animate nouns ending in –**а** or –**я** do not decline like other masculine nouns. If the accent falls on the ending, the word declines exactly as though it were feminine. If the accent falls on the stem, the word has feminine endings for the nominative, accusative, and genitive singular cases, but has masculine endings for all remaining cases. Note the examples of бацька, *father*, and тата, *dad*.

	Sing.	Pl.	Sing.	Pl.
Nom.	бацька	бацькі	тата	таты
Acc.	бацьку	бацькоў	тату	татаў
Gen.	бацькі	бацькоў	таты	татаў
Dat.	бацьку	бацькам	тату	татам
Instr.	бацькам	бацькамі	татам	татамі
Prep.	аб бацьку	аб бацьках	аб таце	татах

сабака	*dog*
слуга	*servant*
суддзя	*judge*

3.7 Declension misfits

Some nouns do not fit well in the normal declension patterns. These include the neuter noun дзіця, *child*, and the feminine nouns любоў, *love*, and кроў, *blood*.

Nom.	дзіця	дзеці	любоў	кроў
Acc.	дзіця	дзяцей	любоў	кроў
Gen.	дзіцяці	дзяцей	любові	крыві
Dat.	дзіцяці	дзецям	любові	крыві
Instr.	дзіцём	дзецьмі	любоўю	крывёй
Prep.	аб дзіцяці	аб дзецях	аб любові	у крыві

There are many nouns, mostly foreign words, which do not decline. They have the same form, regardless of case or number.

маці	*mother*
пані	*Mrs.*

Chapter 4

Irregular Plurals

4.1 Words with no plural form

Many words have only a singular form. Most of these words have no plural in English either. Included are things like substances, proper nouns, and ideas.

бульба	*potato*	сонца	*sun*
вецер	*wind*	спакой	*stillness*
ліха	*evil*	сярэдзіна	*middle*

Most neuter nouns ending in **–мя** have no plural form.

бярэмя	*burden*	семя	*seed*
вымя	*udder*	цемя	*top of head*
полымя	*flame*		

4.2 Words with no singular form

Many words have only a plural form.

абцугі	*pincers*	кпіны	*laughter*
акуляры	*eyeglasses*	крупы	*porridge*
арэлі	*child's swing*	людзі	*people*
выбары	*election*	нетры	*depths*
грошы	*money*	паводзіны	*behavior*
грудзі	*chest*	прысмакі	*hors d'oeuvres*
джунглі	*jungle*	сані	*sled*
дзверы	*door*	суніцы	*wild strawberries*
дровы	*firewood*	суткі	*twenty-four hours*
забабоны	*superstition*	шахматы	*chess*
зносіны	*relations*	штаны	*pants*
каноплі	*hemp*		

4.3 Irregular plurals

The plural forms of these words have different stems than the singular forms.

Masc.

Sing.		Pl.	Gen. Pl.
пан	*gentleman*	панове	паноў
сусед	*neighbor*	суседзі	суседзяў
чорт	*devil*	чэрці	чарцей

Neut.

вока	*eye*	вочы	вачэй
вуха	*ear*	вушы	вушэй
зерне	*grain*	зярняты	зярнят
калена	*knee*	калені	каленяў
неба	*sky/heaven*	нябёсы	нябёсаў

Fem.

дзяўчына	*girl*	дзяўчаты	дзяўчат
курыца	*chicken*	куры	курэй

4.4 Nouns ending in -**ін**

These animate nouns denote types of people. Other than the nominative plural ending, the rest of the plural endings are the same as for other nouns. The genitive plural ending is –**аў** and is unaccented.

Masc.	Fem.		Pl.
гараджанін	гараджанка	*townsperson*	гараджане
грамадзянін	грамадзянка	*citizen*	грамадзяне
мешчанін	мешчанка	*aristocrat*	мяшчане
палачанін	палачанка	*courtier*	палачане
селянін	сялянка	*villager*	сяляне
славянін	славянка	*slav*	славяне
хрысціянін	хнысціянка	*christian*	хрысціяне
татарын	татарка	*tatar*	татары

Chapter 5

Adjective Declension

Adjectives generally match the gender and case of the noun they describe. As mentioned in **3.1**, the accusative case of animate masculine nouns and plural nouns is identical to the genitive case. Consistent with this, adjectives describing these nouns also have accusative endings identical with the genitive case.

5.1 Hard stem adjectives

Hard stem adjectives with accented endings decline like малады, *young*.

	Masc.	Neut.	Fem.	Pl.
Nom.	малады	маладое	маладая	маладыя
Acc.	малады (-ога)	маладое	маладую	маладыя (-ых)
Gen.	маладога	маладога	маладой	маладых
Dat.	маладому	маладому	маладой	маладым
Instr.	маладым	маладым	маладой	маладымі
Prep.	аб маладым	аб маладым	аб маладой	аб маладых

Hard stem adjectives with unaccented endings decline like чырвоны, *red*.

Nom.	чырвоны	чырвонае	чырвоная	чырвоныя
Acc.	чырвоны (-ага)	чырвонае	чырвоную	чырвоныя (-ых)
Gen.	чырвонага	чырвонага	чырвонай	чырвоных
Dat.	чырвонаму	чырвонаму	чырвонай	чырвоным
Instr.	чырвоным	чырвоным	чырвонай	чырвонымі
Prep.	аб чырвоным	аб чырвоным	аб чырвонай	аб чырвоных

Adjectives with accented endings of **–гі**, **-кі**, or **–хі** decline like другі, *second*.

Nom.	другі	другое	другая	другія
Acc.	другі (-ога)	другое	другую	другія (-іх)
Gen.	другога	другога	другой	другіх
Dat.	другому	другому	другой	другім
Instr.	другім	другім	другой	другімі
Prep.	аб другім	аб другім	аб другой	аб другіх

Adjectives, with unaccented endings of –**гі**, -**кі**, or –**хі**, decline like х<u>у</u>ткі, *fast*.

Nom.	х<u>у</u>ткі	х<u>у</u>ткае	х<u>у</u>ткая	х<u>у</u>ткія
Acc.	х<u>у</u>ткі (-ага)	х<u>у</u>ткае	х<u>у</u>ткую	х<u>у</u>ткія (-іх)
Gen.	х<u>у</u>ткага	х<u>у</u>ткага	х<u>у</u>ткай	х<u>у</u>ткіх
Dat.	х<u>у</u>ткаму	х<u>у</u>ткаму	х<u>у</u>ткай	х<u>у</u>ткім
Instr.	х<u>у</u>ткім	х<u>у</u>ткім	х<u>у</u>ткай	х<u>у</u>ткімі
Prep.	аб х<u>у</u>ткім	аб х<u>у</u>ткім	аб х<u>у</u>ткай	аб х<u>у</u>ткіх

5.2 Soft stem adjectives

Adjectives, whose stem ends in a softened consonant, decline like ап<u>о</u>шні, *last*.

	Masc.	Neut.	Fem.	Pl.
Nom.	ап<u>о</u>шні	ап<u>о</u>шняе	ап<u>о</u>шняя	ап<u>о</u>шнія
Acc.	ап<u>о</u>шні (-яга)	ап<u>о</u>шняе	ап<u>о</u>шнюю	ап<u>о</u>шнія (-іх)
Gen.	ап<u>о</u>шняга	ап<u>о</u>шняга	ап<u>о</u>шняй	ап<u>о</u>шніх
Dat.	ап<u>о</u>шняму	ап<u>о</u>шняму	ап<u>о</u>шняй	ап<u>о</u>шнім
Instr.	ап<u>о</u>шнім	ап<u>о</u>шнім	ап<u>о</u>шняй	ап<u>о</u>шнімі
Prep.	аб ап<u>о</u>шнім	аб ап<u>о</u>шнім	аб ап<u>о</u>шняй	аб ап<u>о</u>шніх

5.3 Adjective ending variation

The adjectives declined above have the most current and accepted endings, but variations do exist. One common variation replaces the final **–й** of the feminine prepositional ending with a **–ю**. See **3.5** for more on how this variation affects nouns. Another variation replaces the final –**й** of the feminine genitive ending with a –**е**. Although these variations do exist, they are non-standard and should be avoided by the non-native speaker.

5.3 Short adjectives

The use of short adjectives is much more rare in Belarusian than in Russian, being used almost exclusively for the neuter third person impersonal. As in Russian, such adjectives are only used predicatively. The neuter form of the short adjective is identical to the adverb. See Chapter 29 for more on adverb formation.

Only a very few adjectives can take a short form for anything other than the third person impersonal. These include гат<u>о</u>вы, *ready*, and р<u>а</u>ды, *glad*. The word пав<u>і</u>нен, which translates as *should*, has no long form and can only be used as a short adjective.

The forms of the most common short adjectives are given below, along with some examples.

Masc.	Neut.	Fem.	Pl.
гатоў	гатова	гатова	гатовы
павінен	павінна	павінна	павінны
рад	рада	рада	рады

Будзь гатоў! — Заўжды гатоў! — *Be prepared! — Always prepared!*
Я рада, што пакінуў. — *I am glad that he left.*
Яна павінна адразу сказаць ім. — *She should immediately tell him.*

Было маркотна, калі ён не прыйшоў. — *It was sad when he did not come.*
Мы дужа працавалі, каб усё было зроблена ў час. — *We worked hard so that everything was done on time.*

The long adjective is usually used if the subject is not the neuter third person impersonal.

Пакой поўны людзей. — *The room is full of people.*
Яна не абавязаная дапамагчы яму. — *She is not obligated to help him.*

Chapter 6

Comparative and Superlative Adjectives

Only qualitative adjectives can have a superlative or comparative form. If an English adjective can be used comparatively or superlatively, the equivalent Belarusian adjective most likely can as well. By the same token, if the English adjective cannot be used comparatively or superlatively, the Belarusian adjective probably cannot also.

6.1 Short comparative adjective formation

The short comparative form of an adjective is identical to the comparative adverb. The comparative adverb is formed by removing the final –**ы** or –**і** and replacing it with an accented –**ей.** See **29.4** for more on the comparative adverb.

бедны	*poor*	бядней	*poorer*
белы	*white*	бялей	*whiter*
важны	*important*	важней	*more important*
вольны	*free*	вальней	*more free*
вясёлы	*fun*	весялей	*more fun*
дакладны	*precise*	дакладней	*more precise*
ранні	*early*	раней	*earlier*

If the last consonant of the adjective is invariably hard, the final –**ы** is replaced with –**эй.**

мудры	*wise*	муднэй	*wiser*
прыгожы	*beautiful*	прыгажэй	*more beautiful*
хітры	*cunning*	хітрэй	*more cunning*

For adjectives ending in –**ты** or –**ды**, the ending is removed and replaced with one of the accented endings –**цей** or –**дзей** respectively.

багаты	*rich*	багацей	*richer*
густы	*thick, viscous*	гусцей	*thicker, more viscous*
жоўты	*yellow*	жаўцей	*more yellow*
малады	*young*	маладзей	*younger*
просты	*simple*	прасцей	*simpler*
тоўсты	*thick, fat*	таўсцей	*thicker, fatter*
цвёрды	*hard, firm*	цвярдзей	*harder, firmer*
чысты	*clean*	чысцей	*cleaner*

There are a number of irregular comparative adjectives.

высокі	*high*	вышей	*higher*
глыбокі	*deep*	глыбей	*deeper*
далёкі	*far*	далей	*farther*
шырокі	*wide*	шырэй	*wider*
блізкі	*near*	бліжэй	*nearer*
вузкі	*narrow*	вужэй	*narrower*
гладкі	*smooth*	глядзей	*smoother*
кароткі	*short*	караценй	*shorter*
салодкі	*sweet*	саладзей	*sweeter*
глухі	*deaf*	глушэй	*deafer*
дарагі	*expensive*	даражэй	*more expensive*
доўгі	*long*	даўжэй	*longer*
лёгкі	*light*	лягчэй	*lighter*
мяккі	*soft*	мякчэй	*softer*
ціхі	*quiet*	цішэй	*quieter*
хуткі	*fast*	хутчэй	*faster*

6.2 Short comparative adverb usage

Because short comparative adjectives are adverbs, they do not decline and can only be used predicatively.

Я маладзей за яго.	*I am younger than him.*
Кожнаму хацелася стаць бліжэй да вады.	*Each wanted to get closer to the water.*

6.3 Irregular short comparative adjectives

A small number of adjectives have unique short comparative adjective forms, separate from their short comparative adverb form. These adjectives all end in **–шы**, decline like other adjectives, and are not limited to predicate usage.

вялікі	*big*	большы	*bigger*
добры	*good*	лепшы	*better*
дрэнны	*bad*	горшы	*worse*
малы	*small*	меншы	*smaller*

Some examples of usage of short comparative adjectives are given.

Сам быў не ў лепшым стане.	*I myself was not in any better shape.*
Там былі яблыкі болшыя, чым тут.	*The apples were bigger over there than here.*

The adjective малады, *young*, has the normal short comparative form маладзей, but it also has an additional short comparative form малодшы, which has the specialized meaning of junior. The adjective стары does not have a normal short comparative form, but there is the specialized word старшы, which means *older*, or *senior*. Both малодшы and старшы are used like any normal adjective.

Малодшы лейтэнант камандаваў мінамётнай ротай.	*The junior lieutenant commanded the mortar company.*
Апроч мяне была ў маці яшчэ дачка, мая сястра старшая.	*My mother had another daughter besides me, my older sister.*

6.4 Long comparative adjectives

Adjectives that do not have a short comparative form can be used comparatively by placing either больш, *more*, or менш, *less*, before the word.

Я больш палітычны, чым вы разам узятыя.	*I am more tactful than both of you combined.*
Беражок ля ямы стаў больш зручны.	*The rim around the hole became more convenient.*

6.5 Superlatives ending in –**ейшы** or –**эйшы**

Any adjective which has a short comparative form can form a superlative by appending the ending –**шы** to that short comparative form. Adjectives without a short comparative form that ends in –**ей** or –**эй** do not have a unique superlative form.

бядней	*poorer*	бяднейшы	*poorest*
бялей	*whiter*	бялейшы	*whitest*
даражэй	*more expensive*	даражэйшы	*most expensive*
карацей	*shorter*	карацейшы	*shortest*
мякчэй	*softer*	мякчэйшы	*softest*
раней	*earlier*	ранейшы	*earliest*

The adjective стары, *old*, has no short comparative form, but does have the superlative старэйшы, *oldest*.

6.6 Long superlatives

The superlative form of any qualitative adjective can be formed by placing the adjective самы, *most*, before the adjective and by then declining самы to agree with the adjective. This is the form used for adjectives that do not have a superlative form ending in –**ейшы** or –**эйшы**.

Яны стаялі перад самым крутым узгорам.	*They stood in front of the steepest hill.*
А ўвогуле розум — не самае галоўнае ў чалавеку.	*Generally, the mind is not the most important thing to a person.*

Chapter 7

Personal Pronouns

7.1 Personal pronouns

	1st Pers. Sing.	2nd Pers. Sing.	1st Pers. Pl.	2nd Pers. Pl.
Nom.	я	ты	мы	вы
Acc.	мяне	цябе	нас	вас
Gen.	мяне	цябе	нас	вас
Dat.	мне	табе	нам	вам
Instr.	мной*	табой*	намі	вамі
Prep.	аб мне	аб табе	аб нас	аб вас

	3rd Pers. Masc.	3rd Pers. Neut.	3rd Pers. Fem.	3rd Pers. Pl.
Nom.	ён	яно	яна	яны
Acc.	яго	яго	яе	іх
Gen.	яго	яго	яе	іх
Dat.	яму	яму	ёй	ім
Instr.	ім	ім	ёй	імі
Prep.	аб ім	аб ім	аб ёй*	аб іх

*The variations мною, табою, and ёю are very common, but are non-standard and should be avoided. See **3.5** for how this variation effects nouns.

7.2 The reflexive personal pronoun

The reflexive pronoun is a direct synonym for the subject of the sentence. This means that it cannot be the subject of a sentence and does not have a nominative form. This pronoun is used when the subject of the sentence is also some other part of the sentence, such as the direct or indirect object.

Acc.	сябе
Gen.	сябе
Dat.	сабе
Instr.	сабой†
Prep.	аб сабе

†The form сабою does exist, but it too should be avoided as non-standard.

7.3 The pronoun сам

This pronoun is used to emphasize part of the sentence, either the subject, an object, or indirect object. When not used with the subject of the sentence, the pronoun сам simply imparts emphasis and is not actually translated, but when used with the subject of the sentence, its meaning can be roughly translated as *myself*, *yourself*, *himself*, etc... The pronoun сам is used like an adjective, matching the case and gender of the noun it describes.

	Masc.	Neut.	Fem.	Pl.
Nom.	сам	само	сама	самі
Acc.	сам (ога)	само	саму	самі (-іх)
Gen.	самога	самога	самой	саміх
Dat.	самому	самому	самой	самім
Instr.	самім	самім	самой	самімі
Prep.	аб самім	аб самім	аб самой	аб саміх

Ён вырашыў сам прыйсці.	*He decided to come himself.*
Аднойчы нават выратаваў саму каралеву.	*Once he even rescued the queen.*
Але гаварыў ён толькі з самімі суседзьмі.	*However he spoke only with the neighbors.*

Chapter 8

Possessive and Demonstrative Pronouns

These pronouns follow the same rules as adjectives, declining for gender and case to match the nouns they modify, see Chapter 5 for more details on adjectives.

8.1 Possessive pronouns

The first person singular possessive pronoun мой, *my*, declines as follows.

	Masc.	Neut.	Fem.	Pl.
Nom.	мой	маё	мая	мае
Acc.	мой (майго)	маё	маю	мае (маіх)
Gen.	майго	майго	маёй	маіх
Dat.	майму	майму	маёй	маім
Instr.	маім	маім	маёй	маімі
Prep.	аб маім	аб маім	аб маёй	аб маіх

The second person singular possessive pronoun твой, *your*, declines as follows.

Nom.	твой	тваё	твая	твае
Acc.	твой (твайго)	тваё	тваю	твае (тваіх)
Gen.	твайго	твайго	тваёй	тваіх
Dat.	твайму	твайму	тваёй	тваім
Instr.	тваім	тваім	тваёй	тваімі
Prep.	аб тваім	аб тваім	аб тваёй	аб тваіх

The first person plural possessive pronoun наш, *our*, declines as follows.

Nom.	наш	наша	наша	нашы
Acc.	наш (нашага)	наша	нашу	нашы (нашых)
Gen.	нашага	нашага	нашай	нашых
Dat.	нашаму	нашаму	нашай	нашым
Instr.	нашым	нашаму	нашай	нашымі
Prep.	аб нашым	аб нашым	аб нашай	аб нашых

The second person plural possessive pronoun ваш, *your*, declines as follows.

	Masc.	Neut.	Fem.	Pl.
Nom.	ваш	ваша	ваша	вашы
Acc.	ваш (вашага)	ваша	вашу	вашы (вашых)
Gen.	вашага	вашага	вашай	вашых
Dat.	вашаму	вашаму	вашай	вашым
Instr.	вашым	вашаму	вашай	вашымі
Prep.	аб вашым	аб вашым	аб вашай	аб вашых

8.2 Third person possessive pronouns

The words ягоны, *his*, ейны, *her*, and іхны, *their*, are the most common way of indicating possession. They decline like normal adjectives and their usage is extremely common, however some feel that their usage is colloquial and that it is better to indicate possession by preceding the noun with the genitive form of the third person pronoun.

8.3 The reflexive pronoun

The pronoun свой roughly translates as *one's own*, and declines as follows.

Nom.	свой	сваё	свая	свае
Acc.	свой (свайго)	сваё	сваю	свае (сваіх)
Gen.	свайго	свайго	сваёй	сваіх
Dat.	свайму	свайму	сваёй	сваім
Instr.	сваім	сваім	сваёй	сваімі
Prep.	аб сваім	аб сваім	аб сваёй	аб сваіх

8.4 The interrogative possesive pronoun

The pronoun чый roughly translates as *whose*, and declines as follows.

Nom.	чый	чыё	чыя	чые
Acc.	чый (чыйго)	чыё	чыю	чые (чыіх)
Gen.	чыйго	чыйго	чыёй	чыіх
Dat.	чыйму	чыйму	чыёй	чыім
Instr.	чыім	чыім	чыёй	чыімі
Prep.	аб чыім	аб чыім	аб чыёй	аб чыіх

8.4 The demonstrative pronouns

The pronouns гэты, *this*, and той, *that*, decline as follows.

	Masc.	Neut.	Fem.	Pl.
Nom.	гэты	гэта	гэта	гэтыя
Acc.	гэты (гэтага)	гэта	гэта	гэтыя (гэтых)
Gen.	гэтага	гэтага	гэту	гэтых
Dat.	гэтаму	гэтаму	гэтай	гэтым
Instr.	гэтым	гэтым	гэтай	гэтымі
Prep.	аб гэтым	аб гэтым	аб гэтай	аб гэтых

Nom.	той	тое	тая	тыя
Acc.	той (-аго)	тое	тую	тыя (-ых)
Gen.	тага	таго	той	тых
Dat.	таму	таму	той	тым
Instr.	тым	тым	той	тымі
Prep.	аб тым	аб тым	аб той	аб тых

8.5 The pronoun увесь

This pronoun, meaning *all*, declines as follows.

Nom.	увесь	усё	уся	усе
Acc.	увесь (усяго)	усё	усю	усе (усіх)
Gen.	усяго	усяго	усёй	усіх
Dat.	усяму	усяму	усёй	усім
Instr.	усім	усім	усёй	усімі
Prep.	аб усім	аб усім	аб усёй	аб усіх

Chapter 9

Interrogative and Relative Pronouns

These pronouns follow the same rules as adjectives, declining for gender and case to match the nouns they modify, see Chapter 5 for more details on adjectives.

9.1 The interrogative pronouns

The pronouns што, *what*, and хто, *who*, decline as follows.

Nom.	што	хто
Acc.	што	каго
Gen.	чаго	каго
Dat.	чаму	каму
Instr.	чым	кім
Prep.	аб чым	аб кім

The pronouns нішто, *nothing*, and ніхто, *nobody*, decline like што and хто except for the genitive case, for which the accent lies on the middle syllable.

Гэта нішто.	*It is nothing.*
Я нічога не сказаў.	*I did not say anything.*
Год таму зразумеў, што ў жыцці я ніхто і нішто.	*A year ago I realized that in life, I am a nobody and a nothing.*
У пакоі ўжо нікога не было.	*Already there was nobody in the room*

9.3 The pronoun які

The pronoun які declines just like the adjective другі, *second*, see **5.1** for the complete declension. The pronoun is used as the conjunction *which* or *what*. It is also used as an expletive.

Якую кнігу чытаеш?	*Which book are you reading?*
Вось кніга, якую чытаю.	*This is the book, which I am reading.*
Якая дата сёння?	*What is the date today?*
Якая прыгожая дзяўчына!	*What a pretty girl!*

Chapter 10

Numerals

10.1 Numerals and case governance

The numeral адзін, *one*, is used just like an adjective, following the same rules. It declines to match the case and gender of the noun it describes. See Chapter 5 for more details. The numerals два, *two*, тры, *three*, and чатыры, *four*, as well as абодва, *both*, all decline to agree with the case of the noun that they govern. Два and абодва also decline to match the gender of their corresponding nouns. Like adjectives, the accusative animate forms of these numerals coincide with the genitive forms for masculine objects.

У мяне застаецца адна ручка.	*I have one pen left.*
У нас два новыя сталы.	*We have two new tables.*
Я прыехаў з дзвюма гарматамі.	*I arrived with two cannons.*
Ён тры дні не паднімаўся з гнілой саломы.	*For three days, he did not get up off of the moldy hay.*
Ён узяўся абедзвюма рукамі за вугал.	*He grabbed the corner with both hands*

When the numerals два, тры, чатыры, and абодва are used as either the subject or the inanimate direct object of a clause, the nouns that they govern take a special form. For feminine nouns, this form is identical to the genitive singular. For masculine and neuter nouns, it is formed by appending either ы or і to the root, depending on whether the root has a hard or soft ending and on other spelling rules. Any modifying adjectives are declined for the nominitive plural.

У селяніна ёсць два кані.	*The villager has two horses.*
Дзве дзяўчыны прыйшлі.	*Two young ladies came.*
Вось гэтыя тры акны.	*Look at these three windows.*
Чатыры чалавекі стаяць там.	*Four people are standing over there.*
Абодва сыны служаць у арміі.	*Both sons are serving in the army.*
Абедзве даты вельмі прыблізныя.	*Both dates are very close.*

10.2 The number *one*

The number адзін, *one*, declines as follows.

	Masc.	Neut.	Fem.	Pl.
Nom.	адзін	адно	адна	адны
Acc.	адзін (-ога)	адно	адну	адны (-ых)
Gen.	аднаго	аднага	адной	адных
Dat.	аднаму	аднаму	адной	адным
Instr.	адным	адным	адной	аднымі
Prep.	аб адным	аб адным	аб адной	аб адных

The plural form адны is used with nouns that have no singular form, as well as with certain idiomatic constructions.

Там былі адны хлопцы.	*There were only boys there.*
Ён там быў толькі адны суткі.	*He was here for only twenty-four hours.*

The word адзін is also used in certain constructions to mean *each other*.

Мы разумеем адзін аднаго.	*We understand each other.*
Падморгвалі адзін аднаму зайздросным калючым вокам.	*They blinked at each other with prickly envious eyes.*

10.3 The number *two*

The number два, *two*, declines as follows.

	Masc.	Neut.	Fem.
Nom.	два	два	дзве
Acc.	два (двух)	два	дзве
Gen.	двух	двух	дзвюх
Dat.	двум	двум	дзвюм
Instr.	двума	двума	дзвюма
Prep.	аб двух	аб двух	аб дзвюх

10.4 *Three* and *four*

The numbers тры, *three*, and чатыры, *four*, decline as follows.

Nom.	тры	чатыры
Acc.	тры (трох)	чатыры
Gen.	трох	чатырох
Dat.	тром	чатыром
Instr.	трыма	чатырма
Prep.	аб тром	аб чатырох

10.5 *Five* and up

These numbers all decline like сувязь, as shown in **2.9**, including сем, *seven*, and восем, *eight*, even though they do not end in a **ь.**

пяць	*five*	чатырнаццаць	*fourteen*
шэсць	*six*	пятнаццаць	*fifteen*
сем	*seven*	шаснаццаць	*sixteen*
восем	*eight*	семнаццаць	*seventeen*
дзевяць	*nine*	васемнаццаць	*eighteen*
дзесяць	*ten*	дзевятнаццаць	*nineteen*
адзінаццаць	*eleven*	дваццаць	*twenty*
дванаццаць	*twelve*	трыццаць	*thirty*
трынаццаць	*thirteen*		

10.6 *Forty*, *ninety*, and *one hundred*

The words сорак, *forty*, дзевяноста, *ninety*, and сто, *one hundred*, decline as follows.

Nom.	сорак	дзевяноста	сто
Acc.	сорак	дзевяноста	ста
Gen.	сарака	дзевяноста	ста
Dat.	сарака	дзевяноста	ста
Instr.	сарака	дзевяноста	ста
Prep.	аб сарака	аб дзевяноста	аб ста

10.7 *Fifty*, *sixty*, *seventy*, and *eighty*

These numbers decline like пяцьдзесят, *fifty*. These words have two roots, both of which decline. Because of this, although the main accent falls on the final syllable, there is a quieter accent on the end of the first root.

Nom.	пяцьдзесят
Acc.	пяцьдзесят
Gen.	пяцідзесяці
Dat.	пяцідзесяці
Instr.	пяццюдзесяццю
Prep.	пяцідзесяці

шэсцьдзесят	*sixty*
семдзесят	*seventy*
восемдзесят	*eighty*

10.8 *Two hundred* and beyond

These numbers also have two roots, which both decline. The number дзвесце, *two hundred*, has only one accent. The numbers трыста, *three hundred*, чатырыста, *four hundred*, and пяцьсот, *five hundred*, have only one accent in the nominative and accusative cases, but two accents in the rest of the cases. The numbers шэсцьсот, *six hundred*, семсот, *seven hundred*, восемсот, *eight hundred*, and дзевяцьсот, *nine hundred*, have two accents throughout all their forms.

Nom.	дзвесце	трыста	чатырыста	пяцьсот
Acc.	дзвесце	трыста	чатырыста	пяцьсот
Gen.	дзвюхсот	трохсот	чатырохсот	пяцісот
Dat.	дзвюмстам	тромстам	чатыромстам	пяцістам
Instr.	дзвюмастамі	трымастамі	чатырмастамі	пяцістамі
Prep.	аб дзвюхстах	аб трохстах	аб чатырохстах	аб пяцістах

Nom.	шэсцьсот	семсот	восемсот	дзевяцьсот
Acc.	шэсцьсот	семсот	восемсот	дзевяцьсот
Gen.	шасцісот	сямісот	васмісот	дзевяцісот
Dat.	шасцістам	сямістам	васмістам	дзевяцістам
Instr.	шасцюстамі	сямюстамі	васмюстамі	дзевяццюстамі
Prep.	аб шасцістах	аб сямістах	аб васмістах	аб дзевяцістах

10.9 Collective numerals

These numbers are used with nouns that do not have a singular form, and in certain cases with animate nouns. The collective numerals have adjectival endings for the oblique cases. When a collective numeral is in the nominative or accusative case, the noun that it governs takes the genitive plural case. For oblique cases, the noun takes the same case as the numeral. As always, the accusative animate form is the same as the genitive.

Nom.	двое	трое	чацвёра	пяцёра
Acc.	двое	трое	чацвёра	пяцёра
Gen.	дваіх	траіх	чацвярых	пяцярых
Dat.	дваім	траім	чацвярым	пяцярым
Instr.	дваімі	траімі	чацвярымі	пяцярымі
Prep.	аб дваіх	аб траіх	аб чацвярых	аб пяцярых

Nom.	шасцёра	сямёра
Acc.	шасцёра	сямёра
Gen.	шасцярых	семярых
Dat.	шасцярым	семярым
Instr.	шасцярымі	семярымі
Prep.	аб шасцярых	аб семярых

The words двое, трое, and чацвёра can be used with nouns that only have a plural form.

У нас двое саней.	*We have two sleds.*
Загадана ўзяць ежы на трое сутак.	*It was ordered that enough food be taken for three days.*

These numerals can also be used to denote a number of people. They are especially used with men, workers, children, and words that decline like the neuter nouns of section 2.6.

У яго трое дзяцей.	*He has three children.*
Чацвёра манахаў-дамініканаў неслі вялізны чорны крыж.	*For dominican monks carried a large black cross.*
Сем прыйшлі, а пяцёра з іх спазніліся.	*Seven came, but five of them were late.*

10.10 Ordinal numerals

These adjectives are used as ordinal numbers.

першы	*first*	пятнаццаты	*fifteenth*
другі	*second*	шаснаццаты	*sixteenth*
трэці	*third*	семнаццаты	*seventeenth*
чацвёрты	*fourth*	васемнаццаты	*eighteenth*
пяты	*fifth*	дзевятнаццаты	*nineteenth*
шосты	*sixth*	дваццаты	*twentieth*
сёмы	*seventh*	трыццаты	*thirtieth*
восьмы	*eighth*	саракавы	*fortieth*
дзевяты	*ninth*	пяцідзесяты	*fiftieth*
дзесяты	*tenth*	шасцідзесяты	*sixtieth*
адзінаццаты	*eleventh*	сямідзесяты	*seventieth*
дванаццаты	*twelfth*	васьмідзесяты	*eightieth*
трынаццаты	*thirtieth*	дзевяносты	*ninetieth*
чатырнаццаты	*fourteenth*	соты	*hundredth*

Chapter 11

1st Conjugation Verbs

Most of the difficulty involved with Belarusian verbs comes from the spelling rules, which distort the ending of the verb. Careful attention to spelling rules predicts and explains the different variations of conjugation. Verbs of the 1st conjugation are called type 1 verbs. Unless otherwise noted, all verbs here are imperfective.

11.1 The root ends in a vowel and the ending is accented

In general, type 1 verbs conjugate like даваць, *to give*.

даю	даём
даеш	даяце
дае	даюць

		1st pers. sing.	2nd pers. sing.
жаваць	*to chew*	жую	жуеш
пець	*to sing*	пяю	пяеш

This group also incudes verbs whose stem ends in **ь** or the apostrophe. An example of these is біць, *to hit*.

б’ю	б’ём
б’еш	б’яце
б’е	б’юць

ліць	*to pour*	лью	льеш
піць	*to drink*	пью	пьеш

11.2 The root ends in a vowel and the root is accented

Verbs of this type conjugate like чакаць, *to wait*.

чакаю	чакаем
чакаеш	чакаеце
чакае	чакаюць

гадаць	*to guess*	гадаю	гадаеш
шыць	*to sew*	шыю	шыеш

11.3 The root ends in a consonant and the ending is accented

Most verbs of this type conjugate like жыць, *to live*.

жыву	жывём
жывеш	жывяце
жыве	жывуць

		1st pers. sing.	2nd pers. sing.
зваць	*to call*	заву	завеш
грызці	*to gnaw*	грызу	грызеш

For verbs of this type, whose root ends in **д** or **т** for the first person singular and third person plural, the final consonant changes to either **дз** or **ц** for the other persons. They conjugate like класці, *to put*.

кладу	кладзём
кладзеш	кладзяце
кладзе	кладуць

ісці	*to go*	іду	ідзеш
цвісці	*to bloom*	цвіту	цвіцеш

For verbs of this type, whose root ends in **г** or **к** for the first person singular and third person plural, the final consonant changes to either **ж** or **ч** for the other persons. They conjugate like пячы, *to bake*.

пяку	пячом
пячэш	пячаце
пячэ	пякуць

сячы	*to cut up*	сяку	сячэш
берагчы	*to take care of*	берагу	беражэш

Verbs of this type, whose root ends in an invariable hard consonant conjugate like браць, *to take*.

бяру	бяром
бярэш	бяраце
бярэ	бяруць

перці	*to make one's way*	пру	прэш
церці	*to rub*	тру	трэш

11.4 The root ends in a consonant and the root is accented

Verbs like these conjugate like цягнуць, *to pull*.

цягну	цягнем
цягнеш	цягнеце
цягне	цягнуць

		1st pers. sing.	2nd pers. sing.
прыняць	*to accept*	прыму	прымеш
узяць	*to take*	вазму	возмеш

Verbs of this type, whose root ends in **д**, conjugate like быць, *to be*.

буду	будзем
будзеш	будзеце
будзе	будуць

ехаць	*to go [by vehicle]*	еду	едзеш
красці	*to steal*	краду	крадзеш

Verbs of this type, whose root ends in **г**, conjugate like магчы, *to be able*.

магу	можам
можаш	можаце
можа	могуць

легчы	*to lie down*	лягу	ляжаш

Verbs of this type, whose root ends in an invariably hard consonant, conjugate like рэзаць, *to cut*.

рэжу	рэжам
рэжаш	рэжаце
рэжа	рэжуць

казаць	*to say*	кажу	кажаш
плакаць	*to cry*	плачу	плачаш

Chapter 12

2nd Conjugation Verbs

Most of the difficulty involved with Belarusian verbs comes from the spelling rules, which distort the ending of the verb. Careful attention to spelling rules predicts and explains the different variations of this conjugation. Unless otherwise noted, all verbs here are imperfective. Verbs of this conjugation are called type 2 verbs.

12.1 The root ends in a vowel

Accent placement of type 2 verbs has no effect. Some examples of these verbs are стаяць, *to stand*, строіць, *to prepare*, and таіць, *to hide.*

стаю	стаім	строю	строім	таю	тоім
стаіш	стаіце	строіш	строіце	тоіш	тоіце
стаіць	стаяць	строіць	строяць	тоіць	тояць

12.2 The root ends in some other consonant

These verbs conjugate very similarly to the verbs in **12.1**, but there are variations on the endings, depending on what consonant the root ends in. Verbs, whose root ends in **л** or **н** have the same endings as the verbs shown above.

помню	помнім
помніш	помніце
помніць	помняць

		1st pers. sing.	2nd pers. sing.
валіць	*to knock down*	валю	валіш
гнаць	*to chase* (determinate)	ганю	гоніш

Verbs of this type, whose root ends in **б**, **в**, **м**, **п**, or **ф**, have a **л** added between the root and the ending for the first person singular.

раблю	робім
робіш	робіце
робіць	робяць

ставіць	*to put*	стаўлю	ставіш
карміць	*to feed*	кармлю	корміш
купіць	*to buy* (perfective)	куплю	купіш

If the final letters of the root are **дз**, **з**, **с**, **сц**, or **ц**, they change for the first person singular as shown below. An example of these verbs is хадзіць, *to walk*.

хаджу	ходзім
ходзіш	ходзіце
ходзіць	ходзяць

дз	—>	**дж**
з	—>	**ж**
с	—>	**ш**
сц	—>	**шч**
ц	—>	**ч**

		1st pers. sing.	2nd pers. sing.
вазіць	*to transport*	важу	возіш
ляцець	*to fly*	лячу	ляціш
насіць	*to carry*	нашу	носіш
песціць	*to pamper*	пешчу	песціш

Verbs of this type, whose root ends in an invariably hard consonant, conjugate like бачыць, *to see*.

бачу	бачым
бачыш	бачыце
бачыць	бачаць

гаварыць	*to speak*	гавару	гаворыш
служыць	*to serve*	служу	служыш
рашыць	*to decide*	рашу	рэшыш

Chapter 13

Miscellaneous Verbs and Verb Irregularities

13.1 Three miscellaneous verbs

The verbs бегчы, *to run*, даць, *to give*, and есці, *to eat*, conjugate as follows.

бягу	бяжым	дам	дадзім	ем	ядзім
бяжыш	бяжыце	дасі	дасце	еш	ясце
бяжыць	бягуць	дасць	дадуць	есць	ядуць

13.2 Shifting stress

For many verbs, the accent is on the ending for the first person singular, but is the root for all other persons. This happens most often when the final syllable of the infinitive is accented.

infin.		1st pers. sing.	2nd pers. sing.
вазіць	*to transport*	важу	возіш
гаварыць	*to speak*	гавару	гаворыш
прыняць	*to receive*	прыму	прымеш
хацець	*to want*	хачу	хочаш

13.3 Verb ending variation

The verbs conjugated above have the most current and accepted endings, but variations do exist. One common variation that effects verbs of the types discussed in **11.1** and **11.3** is to replace the ending of the 1st person plural, –**ём** or –**ом**, with the endings –**ем** or–**эм**, respectively. Another common variation, which effects all verbs with accented endings, replaces the final -**е** of the 2nd person plural with a –**ё**. Although these variations do exist, they are non-standard and should be avoided by the non-native speaker.

Chapter 14

Reflexive Verbs

14.1 Use of reflexive verbs

The one characteristic that all reflexive verbs have in common is that they cannot take a direct object in the accusative case. Very often, the fact that the verb is reflexive means that the subject of the sentence is what is being acted upon.

Мяч кідаецца ім.	*The ball is thrown by him.*
Яны баяцца.	*They are afraid.*

14.2 Conjugation of reflexive verbs

Reflexive verbs in general are all formed from non-reflexive verbs in the same way. Below are given examples of both type 1 and type 2 reflexive verbs. The reader will notice that they are formed in the exact same way. An example of a type 1 reflexive verb is старацца, *to try*, and an example of a type 2 reflexive verb is туліцца, *to press against*.

стараюся	стараемся	тулюся	тулімся
стараешся	стараецеся	тулішся	туліцеся
стараецца	стараюцца	туліцца	туляцца

		1st pers. sing.	2nd pers. sing.
падабацца	*to be pleasing*	падабаюся	падабаешся
спадзявацца	*to hope*	спадзяюся	спадзяешся
баяцца	*to fear*	баюся	баішся
нарадзіцца	*to be born*	нараджуся	народзішся

14.3 Reflexive past tense, participles, and gerunds

All other parts of the verb are formed like normal verbs, with the suffix **–ся** placed on the end.

Ён стараўся дапамагаць.	*He tried to help.*
Ляжалі абняўшыся і маўчалі.	*They lay hugging and were quiet.*
Міхась быстра падняўся з зямлі, не аглядаючыся вакол.	*Michael quickly got up off the ground, not looking around.*

Chapter 15

Past Tenses

15.1 Past tense formation

Belarusian verbal aspect is similar to Russian and Ukrainian. Consult a text on one of these languages for more information on verbal aspect. Belarusian has two past tenses, the past perfect and the past imperfect. The past tense form is conjugated for gender and number, but not for person. The past tense is formed from the infinitive of the appropriate aspect.

Мы шмат рабілі, калі жылі там.	*We were getting a lot done while we were living there.*
Я пазнаёміўся з ім, калі прыехаў.	*I met him when I arrived.*
Густая і чорная вада цякла ціха і спакойна.	*The thick and black water flowed quietly quietly and peacefully.*

Infinitives with the ending –**ць** form the past tense by replacing the final **–ць** with –**ў** to form the masculine, -**ло** to form the neuter, -**ла** to form the feminine, or **-лі** to form the plural. If unaccented, the neuter ending is **–ла.**

infin.		masc.	neut.	fem.	pl.
быць	*to be*	быў	было	была	былі
жыць	*to live*	жыў	жыло	жыла	жылі
чытаць	*to read*	чытаў	чытала	чытала	чыталі

15.2 Past tense of verbs ending in –чы or -ці

The past tense of these verbs really just have to be memorized. If the masculine form ends in -**ў**, the verb is conjugated for the other genders by replacing the final -**ў** with the proper ending, either –**ло**, -**ла**, or –**лі.**

весці	*to bring*	вёў	вяло	вяла	вялі
есць	*to eat*	еў	ела	ела	елі
ісці	*to go*	ішоў	ішло	ішла	ішлі
класці	*to put*	клаў	клала	клала	клалі
красці	*to steal*	краў	крала	крала	кралі
сесці	*to sit*	сеў	села	села	селі
цвісці	*to bloom*	цвіў	цвіло	цвіла	цвілі

If the masculine past tense form ends in a consonant, the other genders are formed by simply adding the appropriate ending to the end of the masculine form

infin.		masc.	neut.	fem.	pl.
бегчы	*to run*	бег	бегла	бегла	беглі
берагчы	*to take care of*	бярог	берагло	берагла	бераглі
валачы	*to drag*	валок	валакло	валакла	валаклі
легчы	*to lie down*	лёг	лягло	лягла	ляглі
магчы	*to be able to*	мог	магло	магла	маглі
пячы	*to bake*	пёк	пякло	пякла	пяклі
сячы	*to cut up*	сек	секла	секла	секлі
стрыгчы	*to cut [hair]*	стрыг	стрыгло	стрыгла	стрыглі
везці	*to transport*	вёз	вязло	вязла	вязлі
лезці	*to climb*	лез	лезла	лезла	лезлі
несці	*to carry*	нёс	несла	несла	неслі
памерці	*to die*	памёр	памерла	памерла	памерлі
перці	*to make one's way*	пёр	перла	перла	перлі
церці	*to rub*	цёр	церла	церла	церлі

15.3 Past tense of verbs ending in –нуць

Most verbs ending in –**нуць** form the past tense normally, but there are a few irregular ones that just have to be memorized. These ones form the masculine past tense by removing the **–нуць** ending. The other genders are formed by adding the appropriate ending.

глухнуць	*to go deaf*	глух	глухла	глухла	глухлі
знікнуць	*to disappear*	знік	знікла	знікла	зніклі
мерзнуць	*to freeze*	мёрз	мерзла	мерзла	мерзлі
пранікнуць	*to penetrate*	пранік	пранікла	пранікла	праніклі
прывыкнуць	*to get used to*	прывык	прывыкла	прывыкла	прывыклі
сохнуць	*to become dry*	сох	сохла	сохла	сохлі
узнікнуць	*to arise*	узнік	узнікла	узнікла	узніклі

Chapter 16

Present and Future Tenses

Belarusian verbal aspect is similar to Russian and Ukrainian. Consult a text on one of these languages for more information on verbal aspect.

16.1 Present tense

Belarusian has one present tense and two future tenses, the future perfect and the future imperfect. The present tense is formed by conjugating the infinitive of the imperfect aspect of a verb for the correct person.

Я тут жыву.	*I live here.*
Я жыву цяпер у сяброў.	*I am living with friends right now.*
Я жыву з імі месяц.	*I have lived with them for a month.*

The verb быць, *to be*, has no present tense conjugation. The verb *to be* is often rendered in the present tense as a pause, represented as a dash when written. It is dropped completely in third person impersonal constructions. The verb *to be* can also be expressed by using other verbs like бываць, *to occur*, and стаць, *to become*.

Я — амерыканец, а ты — беларус.	*I am an american, and you are a belarusian.*
Хлопчык — вельмі галодны.	*The young man is very hungry.*
Цяжка вывучыць новую мову.	*It is difficult to learn a new language.*

16.2 Future imperfect formation

The future imperfect tense is formed by conjugating the verb быць for the correct person, and following that with the infinitive of a verb's imperfective aspect.

Што будзеш рабіць?	*What will you be doing?*
Я буду многа чытаць.	*I will be reading a lot.*

16.3 Future perfect formation

The future perfect tense is formed by conjugating the infinitive of a verb's perfective aspect for the correct person.

Што зробіш?	*What will you do?*
Я скончу гэту кнігу.	*I will finish this book.*

Chapter 17

The Imperative

17.1 Formation of the imperative

In the case of the vast majority of Belarusian verbs, the imperative is formed as follows. Conjugate the verb for the 2nd person plural and remove the final two letters. If the stem ends in a vowel, add an –**й**. If the stem ends in an invariably hard consonant, nothing is added, otherwise add either an –**і** or a –**ь**. The ending –**і** is added either if the infinitive is more than one syllable and the accent falls on the last syllable, or if the root ends in two or more consonants (note that the letter combinations **дз** and **дж** are each treated as a single letter). If neither of these two conditions is met, then a –**ь** is added. This forms the singular form of the imperative. To form the plural imperative, the suffix –**це** is appended to the singular form.

infin.		2rd pers. sing.	stem	imp. sing.	imp. pl
браць	*to take*	бярэш	бяр-	бяры	бярыце
глядзець	*to look*	глядзіш	глядз-	глядзі	глядзіце
глянуць	*to glance*	гляніш	глян-	глянь	гляньце
жыць	*to live*	жывеш	жыв-	жыві	жывіце
легчы	*to lie down*	ляжаш	ляж-	ляж	ляжце
мыць	*to wash*	мыеш	мы-	мый	мыйце
ехаць	*to drive*	едзеш	едз-	едзь	едзце
рабіць	*to do*	робіш	роб-	рабі	рабіце
рэзаць	*to slice*	рэжаш	рэж-	рэж	рэжце
сячы	*to cut up*	сячэш	сяч-	сячы	сячыце
стаць	*to become*	станіш	стан-	стань	станьце
стукнуць	*to knock*	стукніш	стукн-	стукні	стукніце
чакаць	*to wait*	чакаеш	чака-	чакай	чакайце

17.2 Vowel changes due to spelling rules

There are several verbs, which seem to be irregular, but the changes of their vowels are really just manifestions of spelling rules.

баяцца	*to fear*	баешся	бо-	бойся	бойцеся
смяяцца	*to dare*	смяешся	сме-	смейся	смейцеся
стаяць	*to stand*	стаіш	сто-	стой	стойце

17.3 Verbs beginning with вы-

If imperative form of verb ends in an –i (or -ы due to spelling rules) the verb formed by adding the prefix **вы**- to the verb also has an imperative that ends in –**i**, even though the accent will fall on the prefix.

весці	*to lead*	вядзі	вывесці	*to lead away*	выведзі
кахаць	*to say*	кажы	выказаць	*to state smthng.*	выкажы
рваць	*to tear*	рві	вырваць	*to tear away*	вырві

17.4 Irregular imperatives

Certain verbs have irregular imperatives. They are given below.

даваць	*to give*	даеш	давай	давайце
даць	*to give* (perfective)	дасі	дай	дайце
есці	*to eat*	еш	еш	ешце
біць	*to hit*	б'еш	бі	біце
ліць	*to pour*	льеш	лі	ліце
піць	*to drink*	пьеш	пі	піце

17.5 1st person plural imperative

The most common way of forming the 1st person plural imperative is by using the word давайце. If the verb is imperfective, давайце is followed by the verb's infinitive. If the verb is perfective, the word давайце is followed by the verb conjugated for the 1st person plural.

Давайце яшчэ нальём.	*Let's pour in some more.*
Давайце крычаць: хто слабей крыкне, таго зьядзём.	*Let's yell: Whoever yells the weakest, him we will eat.*

Alternatively, verbs do have a special form for the 1st person plural imperative.

Бярэм манаткі і марш!	*Let's grab our gear and move out!*
Уцякайма, пакуль не позна.	*Let's get out of here, while it's not to late.*
Едзем на базар, каб купіць ежу на заўтра.	*Let's go to the market to buy food for tomorrow.*

If the 2nd person singular imperative ends in **–й**, the 1st person plural imperative is formed by adding the letters **–ма** to the end of the imperative.

infin.		imp. sing.	1st pers. pl. imp.
будаваць	*to build*	будуй	будуйма
мыцца	*to wash oneself*	мыйся	мыймася
чытаць	*to read*	чытай	чытайма

If the 2nd person singular imperative ends in an accented **–ы** or **–і**, the 1st person plural imperative is formed by replacing that final letter with **–эм** or **–ем** respectively.

бегчы	*to run*	бяжы	бяжэм
брацца	*to wrap around smthng*	бярыся	бярэмся
крычаць	*to yell*	крычы	крычэм
сарваць	*to tear* (perfective)	сарві	сарвем
спаць	*to sleep*	спі	спем
хадзіць	*to walk*	хадзі	хадзем

Otherwise, the 1st person plural imperative is identical to the 1st person plural indicative form.

быць	*to be*	будзь	будзем
сесці	*to sit down* (perfective)	сядзь	сядзем
легчы	*to lie down* (perfective)	ляж	лягжам

17.6 3rd person imperative

The third person imperative is formed by placing either the particle хай or няхай before the verb, conjugated for the third person, either singular or plural.

Хай гаворыць.	*Let him speak.*
Не чапай, хай ляжыць.	*Don't disturb him, let him lie.*
Хай будзе святло.	*Let there be light!*

Chapter 18

Verbs of Motion

There is a set of verbs expressing motion, whose imperfective aspect has two distinct parts, the indeterminate form and the determinate form. The determinate form is used when expressing a distinct progression from one point to another. The indeterminate form is used in all other instances.

indeterminate	determinate	
хадзіць	ісці	*to walk*

хаджу	ходзім	іду	ідзём
ходзіш	ходзіце	ідеш	ідзяце
ходзіць	ходзяць	ідзе	ідуць
хадзіў	хадзілі	ішоў	ішлі
хадзіла		ішло	
хадзіла		ішла	

ездзіць	ехаць	*to go [by transport]*

езджу	ездзім	еду	едзеш
ездзіш	ездзіце	едзеш	едзеце
ездзіць	ездзяць	едзе	едуць
ездзіў	ездзілі	ехаў	ехалі
ездзіла		ехала	
ездзіла		ехала	

бегаць	бегчы	*to run*

бегаю	бегаем	бягу	бяжым
бегаеш	бегаеце	бяжыш	бяжыце
бегае	бегаюць	бяжыць	бягуць
бегаў	бегалі	бег	беглі
бегала		бегла	
бегала		бегла	

вадзіць		весці		*to lead*
ваджу	водзім	вяду	вядзём	
водзіш	водзіце	вядзеш	ведзяце	
водзіць	водзяць	вядзе	вядуць	
вадзіў	вадзілі	вёў	вялі	
вадзіла		вяло		
вадзіла		вяла		

вазіць		везці		*to transport*
важу	возім	вязу	вязём	
возіш	возіце	вязеш	вязяце	
возіць	возяць	вязе	вязуць	
вазіў	вазілі	вёз	везлі	
вазіла		везла		
вазіла		везла		

ганяць		гнаць		*to chase*
ганяю	ганяем	ганю	гонім	
ганяеш	ганяеце	гоніш	гоніце	
ганяе	ганяюць	гоніць	гоняць	
ганяў	ганялі	гнаў	гналі	
ганяла		гнала		
ганяла		гнала		

качаць		каціць		*to roll*
качаю	качаем	качу	коцім	
качаеш	качаеце	коціш	коціце	
качае	качаюць	коціць	коцяць	
качаў	качалі	каціў	кацілі	
качала		каціла		
качала		каціла		

лазіць		лезці		*to climb*
лажу	лазім	лезу	лезем	
лазіш	лазіце	лезеш	лезеце	
лазіць	лазяць	лезе	лезуць	
лазіў	лазілі	лез	лезлі	
лазіла		лезла		
лазіла		лезла		

лятаць		ляцець		*to fly*
лятаю	лятаем	лячу	ляцім	
лятаеш	лятаеце	ляціш	ляціце	
лятае	лятаюць	ляціць	ляцяць	
лятаў	ляталі	ляцеў	ляцелі	
лятала		ляцела		
лятала		ляцела		

насіць		несці		*to carry*
нашу	носім	нясу	нясём	
носіш	носіце	нясеш	несяце	
носіць	носяць	нясе	нясуць	
насіў	насілі	нёс	неслі	
насіла		несла		
насіла		несла		

цягаць		цягнуць		*to pull*
цягаю	цягаем	цягну	цягнем	
цягаеш	цягаеце	цягнеш	цягнеце	
цягае	цягаюць	цягне	цягнуць	
цягаў	цягалі	цягнуў	цягнулі	
цягала		цягнула		
цягала		цягнула		

Chapter 19

Verbel Prefixes

19.1 Prefix usage

Adding a prefix to an imperfective verb creates a perfective verb with a modified meaning. When a prefix ending in a consonant is attached to a verb beginning in an iotized vowel, a buffer symbol ' is placed between them.

When хадзіць has a prefix attached to it, the accent moves to the root for all forms. When ісці has a prefix attached to it, the initial **і**- changes to an **й**- and the accent falls on the prefix for all persons in the present tense except the 1st person singular. The exception to this is the prefix вы-, the accent always falls on this prefix, irrespective of person or tense. When either хадзіць or ісці has a prefix attached, which ends in a consonant, an **ы** is placed as a buffer between the prefix and root.

аб'явіць	*to announce*	пад'ехаць	*to drive up*
прыходжу	*I am coming*	прыходзіў	*I came*
пойдзе	*he will go*	пайшоў	*he went*
разышліся	*they dispersed*	адыходжу	*I am leaving*

19.2 Directional prefix meanings

Each of these prefixes has additional meanings that have nothing to do with direction, but for now I have only listed the meanings which imply a direction of motion. Prefixes can be added to verbs to create new verbs. Adding a prefix to the indeterminate form of a verb of motion creates the imperfective infinitive of a verb, and adding the prefix to the determinate form creates the perfective infinitive of the same verb. The exception to this rule is the verb ехаць and ездзіць, *to go [by transport]*. The perfective aspect of a verb can be formed by adding a prefix to ехаць, but the imperfective aspect of the same verb is formed by adding the prefix to the verb язджаць. The form язджаць rarely occurs on its own, without a prefix. These prefixes can also be added to other, non-motion verbs.

па- This prefix is added to the directional infinitive to form the perfective infinitive for all verbs of motion.

пайсці	*to go [somewhere, on foot]*
паехаць	*to go [somewhere, by transport]*
пабегчы	*to run [somewhere]*
панесці	*to carry [something somewhere]*

аб- This prefix implies encompassing or overtaking motion.

абыходзіць	абыйсці	*to walk around*
аб’язджаць	аб’ехаць	*to drive around*
абганяць	абагнаць	*to overtake*
абкладваць	абкласці	*to surround [with something]*

ад- This prefix has the meaning of moving away.

адыходзіць	адыйсці	*to withdraw*
адносіць	аднесці	*to carry off*
адбіраць	адабраць	*to take away*
адрываць	адарваць	*to tear off*

вы- This prefix has the meaning of moving away.

адходзіць	выйсці	*to leave [on foot]*
адносіць	аднесці	*to carry off*
адбіраць	адабраць	*to take away*
адрываць	адарваць	*to tear off*

да- This prefix implies movement as far as, or up to, a certain point.

даходзіць	дайсці	*to reach*
даносіць	данесці	*to bring as far as*
даганяць	дагнаць	*to catch up to*
дабірацца	дабрацца	*to get as far as*

з- This prefix has the meaning of coming off of, or coming out of.

зыходзіць	зыйсці	*to come off of*
з’язжаць	з’ехаць	*to depart*
зносіць	знесці	*to take down from, to take out of*
знімаць	зняць	*to remove*

за- Verbs with this prefix have the meanings of traveling far, or past something.

заходзіць	зайсці	*to walk behind*
забегаць	забегчы	*to run ahead*
заносіць	занесці	*to carry [far] away*
закладваць	закласці	*to place behind*

на- Verbs with this prefix have the meaning of collision with something.

находзіць	найсці	*to come across, to walk into*
наязджаць	наехаць	*to run into [with a vehicle]*
нападаць	напасці	*to fall into*
наступаць	паступіць	*to approach [a certain time]*

пад- This prefix has the basic meaning of upward motion.

падыходзіць	падыйсці	*to approach [on foot]*
пад’язджаць	пад’ехаць	*to drive up to*
падбягаць	падбегчы	*to run up to*
паднімаць	падняць	*to lift*

пера- This prefix has the meaning of crossing over something.

пераходзіць	перайсці	*to walk across*
пераносіць	перанесці	*to carry across*
перадаваць	перадаць	*to pass along*
перакладваць	перакласці	*to transfer, to translate*

пра- This prefix gives verbs the meaning of passing by something.

праходзіць	прайсці	*to pass by*
праязджаць	праехаць	*to drive past*
прабягаць	прабегчы	*to run by*
праносіць	пранесці	*to carry by*

раз- This prefix gives verbs the meaning of movement in various directions, or distribution.

разыходзіцца	разыйсціся	*to disperse*
раз’язджацца	раз’ехацца	*to drive away [in various directions]*
разбягацца	разбегчыся	*to run off, to scatter*
разлятацца	разляцецца	*to fly away, to scatter*

у- This prefix gives verbs the meaning of entering. It changes to ува with хадзіць and ісці.

уваходзіць	увайсці	*to enter*
уязджаць	уехаць	*to drive in*
убягаць	убегчы	*to run in*
уносіць	унесці	*to carry in*

уз- This prefix gives verbs the meaning of upward motion.

узыходзіць	узыйсці	*to walk up*
узлазіць	узлезці	*to climb up*
узлятаць	узляцець	*to take off*
узвышаць	узвысіць	*to elevate*

Chapter 20

Gerunds and Participles

Gerunds and participles are not commonly used in colloquial Belarusian, but they are found in literature.

20.1 Present imperfect gerunds

These gerunds are formed by conjugating an imperfect infinitive of a verb for the 3rd person plural, removing the final –**ць**, and appending the ending –**чы**. They are often also used as a present active participle, but they do not decline.

infin.		3rd pers. pl.	ger.
вяртацца	*to turn*	вяртаюцца	вяртаючыся
гаварыць	*to speak*	гавораць	гаворачы
пісаць	*to write*	пішуць	пішучы
хадзіць	*to walk*	ходзяць	ходзячы
чытаць	*to read*	чытаюць	чытаючы

Яго вусны заварушыліся, нібы творачы святую малітву.	*His lips moved, as though forming a sacred prayer.*
Нават будучы параненым, ён не меў права на спакойнае жыццё.	*Even being wounded, he didn't have the right to a peaceful life.*

20.2 Past perfect gerunds

These gerunds are formed from perfective verbs by conjugating the verb for the past tense masculine singular and adding the ending –**шы**.

напісаць	*to write*	папісаў	папісаўшы
зрабіць	*to do*	зрабіў	зрабіўшы
вярнуцца	*to return*	вярнуўся	вярнуўшыся
прынесці	*to bring*	прынёс	прынёсшы
пабегчы	*to run*	пабег	пабегшы

Напісаўшы, што трэба было, ён пачаў поркацца ў паперах.	*Having written what was necessary, he began to pore over the papers.*
Перанёсшы яго, рыбы доўга не	*Having carried him over, the fish did not*

вяртaліся.	*return for a while.*

20.3 Past passive participles

Participles are adjectives, obeying all the same rules that other adjectives do. Most of them are formed by attaching –**аны**, or –**ены** to the root of the infinitive. There really isn't much rhyme or reason to the formation, each participle needs to be memorized. These participles can be formed from either aspect, but they are formed much more often from the perfective aspect.

infin.		past pass. part.
пісаць	*to write*	пісаны
звязаць	*to bind* (perfective)	звязаны
купіць	*to buy* (perfective)	куплены
зрабіць	*to do, to make* (perfective)	зроблены
скласці	*to stack* (perfective)	складзены

Monosyllable infinitives form the past passive participle by removing the final –**ць** and appending the suffix –**ты.**

мыць	*to wash*	мыты
біць	*to hit*	біты
шыць	*to sew*	шыты

У выстаўцы ёсць каран беларускі, пісаны татарскімі літарамі.	*In the exibit is a Belarusian Koran, written with the tatar alphabet.*
Яна была падобна да зробленай з каменю фігуркі.	*She was like a statue made from stone.*
Давялося-б яму зараз выціраць свой твар ад слядоў, а галаве прышлося-б пазнаёміцца з бітым шклом.	*He just happened to peel his face away from the footprints, and his head happened to become aquainted with the smashed glass.*

Chapter 21

The Nominative Case

21.1 Use of the nominative case

This case is taken by the subject of the sentence. If the verb of the sentence is ёсць, or if there is no verb, then the object of the sentence also takes the nominative case.

Беларусь — прыгожы кут.	*Belarus is a beautiful land.*
Але ён дурны, а я разумны.	*But he is foolish, and I am wise.*

The direct objects of the verb зваць, *to call*, often take the nominative case.

Яго завуць Саша.	*His name is Sasha.*

The direct object of the verbs быць, *to be*, and стаць, *to become*, can take the nominative case if the direct object is an adjective that is being used as a predicate.

Яна стала цяпер жвавая.	*She now became lively.*
Рана ці позна будуць названыя злачынцамі і праклатыя.	*Sooner or later, they will be labeled criminals and damned.*

Chapter 22

The Accusative Case

22.1 Use of the accusative case

The direct object of most verbs usually takes the accusative case. Certain prepositions are followed by nouns in the accusative case, often when motion is implied. A period of time placed in the accusative case, with no preposition preceding it, indicates that an action was carried out over the course of that time.

Скажы мне, ты запраўды мяне кахаеш? Кахаю цябе	*Tell me, do you really love me? I love you.*
Я жыў з імі месяц.	*I lived with them for a month.*

22.2 Prepositions with the accusative case

The following prepositions can be followed by the accusative case. Often, the meaning of the prefix revolves around a sense of motion. The meaning of each preposition in that context is given.

аб — *against*

Лодка стукнулася аб бераг.	*The boat bumped against the shore.*

з — *about*

Прайшоў з кіламетр.	*I walked about a kilometer.*

за — *behind*

Ён пайшоў за хату.	*He went behind the house.*

at

Саджуся за стол.	*I sit down at the table.*

after

Гаварылі далёка за поўнач.	*They spoke well past midnight.*

[not translated, expresses distance]

Жыве за 40 кіламетраў за горада.	*He lives 40 kilometers from the city.*

in

Гэта можна зрабіць за два	*This can get done in two days.*

дні.

на *on*

Паставіць яго на стол. *He will put it on the table.*

to

Ідзём на Магілёў. *We’re going to Mohilyow.*

[not translated, similar to ‘per’]

Два разы на тыдзень. *Twice a week.*

by

Дыван тры на шэсць метраў. *The carpet is three by six meters.*

па *up to*

Стаіць у вадзе па пояс. *He stands in water up to his waist.*

for

Пайдзі пад студню па ваду. *Go to the well for water.*

along

Людзі ішлі па той бок. *People were walking along that side.*

пад *under*

Схаваў яго пад падушку. *He hid it under the pillow.*

about

Гадоў пад сорак. *About forty years.*

to

Пайдзі пад студню па ваду. *Go to the well for water.*

паўз *by*

Праязджалі паўз лес. *We drove by the forest.*

пра *about*

Мы гаварылі пра яго. *We were talking about him.*

праз *through*

Прайсці праз натоўп. *To pass through a crowd.*

after

Прыйшло праз дзве гадзіны. *It arrived after two weeks.*

because of

Праз гэта я многае страціў. *I suffered a lot because of this.*

скрозь	*through* (implying penetration)	
	Промні прабіваліся скрозь галіны.	*Sunbeams broke through the branches.*
цераз	*across*	
	Пераступіць цераз парог.	*To step across the threshold.*
	through	
	Дождж ішоў цераз поўнач.	*It rained right through midnight.*
у	*to*	
	Дзеці ходзяць ў школу.	*The children go to school.*
	in	
	Запісаў гэта ў сшытак.	*He wrote it down in his notebook.*
	into	
	Яны ўвайшлі ў лес.	*They walked into the forest.*
	on	
	Стукаць у дзверы.	*To knock on the door.*
	at	
	Страляць у праціўніка.	*To shoot at an enemy.*
	up to	
	Намяло снегу ў пояс.	*Snow drifted up to waist height.*
	[not translated, similar to 'per']	
	Адзін раз у год.	*Once a year.*
	on	
	Не працую ў выхадныя.	*I don't work on weekends.*
	[used to denote multiplication]	
	Два ў тры — шэсць.	*Two times three is six.*

Chapter 23

The Genitive Case

23.1 Use of the genitive case

This case is used both by certain prepositions and also to express ownership and relationship. Some verbs require that the direct object be placed in the genitive case. To negate a sentence, the particle не is placed before the direct object, and the direct object is placed in the genitive case. A lack of something can be expressed by the word няма, followed by the noun in the genitive plural, or genitive singular if the noun has no plural form.

Расліны баюцца марозу.	*Plants fear the frost.*
Я сама гэтага хацела.	*I myself wanted this.*
Невядома, хто гаспадар гэтага катэджа.	*It is not know who the owner of this cottage is.*
Я не маю часу.	*I do not have any time.*
Я нічога не разумею.	*I do not understand anything.*

23.2 Prepositions with the genitive case

The following prepositions can be followed by the genitive case. The meaning of each preposition in that context is given.

ад — *from*

Ад сасны адламалася галінка.	*A branch broke off from the tree.*
Схаваліся ад дажджу.	*They hid from the rain.*
Ад вясны да восені.	*From spring to fall.*

than

Мацней ад грому.	*Stronger than thunder.*

акрамя — *but*

Там нікога не было акрамя мяне.	*No one was there besides me.*

апрача *but*

Там нікога не было апрача мяне — *No one was there besides me.*

без *without*

Без усялякай прычыны. — *Without any excuse.*

вакол *around*

Вакол яго сабраліся людзі. — *People gathered around him.*

воддаль *far from*

Воддаль дарогі стаяла вёска. — *Far from the road was a village.*

да *until*

Яшчэ некалькі дзён да жніва. — *It is still a few days until harvest.*

to

Дадаць пяць да трох. — *Add five to three.*

Ужо да берага падплываў. — *He had already swum to the bank.*

дзеля *for [the benefit of someone or something]*

Зраблю гэта дзеля цябе. — *I will do this for you.*

для *for* (many senses)

Для яго гэта лёгкая справа. — It is an easy thing for him.

з *off of* (opposite of на + accusative)

Прыбраў ліст з акна. — *He removed the leaf off of the window.*

out of (opposite of у + accusative)

Выйшаў з вады. — *He got out of the water.*

замест *instead*

Хочаш вады замест чаю? — *Do you want water instead of tea?*

звыш [used to mean a surpassing or exceeding]

Набраў звыш двух дзесяткаў. *He gathered more than twenty.*

каля *near*

Дрэва расце каля плоту. *The tree grows near the fence.*

about

Каля пяці гадзін. *About five o'clock.*

між *among*

Спрэчка між сябраў. *An argument among friends.*

паводле *in accordance with*

Апранутая паводле апошняй моды. *Dressed according to the latest fashions.*

паміж *between*

Стаяць паміж двух агней. *To stand between two fires.*

супраць *across*

Хата стаіць супраць школы. *The house is across from the school.*

against

Плысці супраць цячэння. *To swim against the current.*

Хто «за» і хто «супраць»? *Who is "for" and who is "against"?*

Здарылася супраць маёй волі. *It happened against my will.*

сярод *in the middle of*

Дрэва стаіць сярод поля. *A tree stands in the middle of a field.*

у [used to indicate possession]

У яго баліць галава. *His head hurts.*

at

Шыць паліто ў краўца. *To have the coat mended at the* taylor's.

Chapter 24

The Dative Case

24.1 Use of the dative case

This case is used to signify indirect objects, and is also used by certain prepositions. Very often, words in the dative case can be translated into English as having the word ‘to’ placed before them. There are also certain constructions with predicates that use the dative case.

Вы даяце прыклад усім нашым калгаснікам.	*You give an example to all our workers.*
Мне трэба выйсці.	*I have to leave.*
Адставаць жа нельга нам!	*We must not become separated!*
Не дваццаць табе летаў!	*You are not even twenty years old!*

24.2 Prepositions with the dative case

The following prepositions can be followed by the dative case. The meaning of each preposition in that context is given.

к — [used to indicate moving towards something]

Пайшоў к чорту!	*Go to hell!*

for

Спякла пірог к святу.	*She baked a pie for the holiday.*

The preposition most commonly used with the dative case is па. The different meanings of па + dative are difficult to classify, but several examples are given below. For these usages, the preposition па only takes the dative when the indirect object is singular. If the object is plural, it must take the prepositional case.

Я даў дзецям па яблыку.	*I gave the children one apple apiece.*
Плыць па цячэнню	*To swim with the current.*
Спаборніцтвы па футболу.	*Soccer competition.*
Не прыехаў па хваробе.	*He did not come because he was sick.*
Таварыш па універсітэту.	*A friend from college.*

Chapter 25

The Instrumental Case

25.1 Use of the instrumental case

This case is used by certain prepositions and also to signify that the noun functions as some means for an action. The direct object of some verbs, especially those that translate as *to be*, also takes this case. A word in the instrumental case can often be translated into English by preceding it with the preposition "with."

Гал<u>о</u>ўнай іх сіл<u>а</u>й был<u>і</u> гран<u>а</u>ты.	*Their main weapon was grenades.*
Мы дав<u>а</u>й па<u>е</u>дзем маш<u>і</u>най.	*Let's take the car.*
Ты пав<u>і</u>нна вал<u>о</u>даць г<u>э</u>тай м<u>о</u>вай так, каб ч<u>у</u>лася як уд<u>о</u>ма між людз<u>е</u>й, як<u>і</u>я пабелар<u>у</u>ску гав<u>о</u>раць.	*You should have such control of this, language, that you feel at home among people who speak Belarusian.*

25.2 Prepositions with the instrumental case

The following prepositions can be followed by the instrumental case. The meaning of each preposition in that context is given.

з — *with* (as in *accompanying*)

Я пайш<u>о</u>ў з <u>і</u>мі.	*I went with them.*

за — *behind*

Ідз<u>і</u> за мн<u>о</u>ю.	*Walk behind me.*

між — *between*

Дар<u>о</u>га ў<u>е</u>цца між пал<u>я</u>мі.	*The road winds between fields.*

над — *over* (as in *above*)

Над л<u>е</u>сам нав<u>і</u>сла хм<u>а</u>ра.	*A stormcloud hung over the forest.*

exceeding

Мар<u>о</u>з над ус<u>і</u>мі мараз<u>а</u>мі.	*A frost exceeding all frosts.*

пад — *beneath*

Жыта залоціцца пад сонцам. — *The rye ripened beneath the sun.*

under

Быць пад строгай аховай. — *To be under heavy guard.*

паміж — *between*

Паміж небам і зямлёю. — *Between heaven and earth.*

перад — *in front of*

Не адступаць перад цяжкасцямі. — *Don’t retreat in the face of difficulty.*

before

Перад тым, трэба падумаць. — *Before that, one must think.*

compared to

Яны нішто перад ім. — *They are nothing compared to him.*

Chapter 26

The Prepositional Case

26.1 Use of the prepositional case

This case is only used when following prepositions, hence the name. The following prepositions can be followed by the prepositional case. The meaning of each preposition in that context is given.

аб *about*

Гаварылі аб усім. — *We spoke of everything.*

на *on*

Кніга ляжыць на стале. — *Walk behind me.*

in

На вайне куды болей патрэбна такая вось дужасць. — *In war, such strength is needed much more.*

па [used to denote movement all over or around something]

Ехаць на санях па лёдзе. — *To ride a sleigh over the ice.*

among

Чуткі хадзілі па вёсках. — *The rumors circulated among the villages.*

after

Па абедзе. — *After dinner.*

For the usages of па given below, the prepositional case can only be used if the object is plural. If it is singular, the dative case must be used, see **24.2** for examples.

Пайшлі па ягоных слядах. — *They followed in his steps.*
Снаборніцтва па лыжах. — *Skiing competition.*

пры *near*

Ён быў пры смерці. — *He was near death.*

with

Я застаўся пры сваёй думцы. — *I was left with my opinion.*

у	*in*		
		Ста<u>і</u>ць у пак<u>о</u>і.	*He is standing in the room.*

Chapter 27

Prepositional Oddities

27.1 Preposition variation

The prepositions listed below have a special form when preceding certain words.

normal form	auxiliary form	
аб	аба	When preceding the words мне, ўсім,and ўсіх.
к	ка	When preceding the word мне.
пад	пада	When preceding the word мной.
над	нада	When preceding the word мной.
перад	перада	When preceding the word мной.
у	ва	When preceding any word beginning with **ў**.
у	ў	Otherwise, if it follows a word ending in a vowel.
з	са	Preceding any word beginning in **ж**, **з**, **м**, **с**, or **ш**.

27.2 Pronouns following prepositions

A characteristic unique to Belarusian of all the Slavic languages, the pronouns ён, яно, яна, and яны do not have a euphonic **н** appended to them when following a preposition.

аб ім	*about it*
да яго	*to him*
з ёй	*with her*
над імі	*over them*

27.3 Prepositional assimilation

The prepositions of one syllable or less are assimilated into the words that follow them. They and the words in front of them are pronounced as one word. For purposes of pronunciation, all spelling rules should be applied to the prepostion as if it were part of the next word, for example, if the following word begins with a softened consonant, the ending of the preposition is pronounced softened. The Phonetic orthography writes the prepositions with the rules applied, while the Official does not. Pronunciation of prepositions reflects the application of the spelling rules, regardless of which orthography is used.

27.3 Prepositions with adverbs

Sometimes prepositions can be followed by an adverb, which is not declined.

Які прагноз на сёння?	*What is the forecast for today?*
Нам трэба купіць ежу на заўтра.	*We need to buy food for tomorrow.*

Chapter 28

Conditional Sentences

28.1 Real conditional sentences

Conditional sentences consist of two clauses, a condition, and the result of that condition. If the result is certain, given the condition, then the sentence is formed thus; The first clause begins with калі and states the condition. The second clause can optionally begin with the word дык, and then states the result.

Калі ён здаровы, дык ён можа працаваць.	*If he is healthy, then he can work.*
Калі ён ведаў, ён не ішоў.	*If he knew, then he did not go.*

28.2 Hypothetical conditional sentences

If the result is uncertain, then the particle бы (б when preceded by a vowel) must be inserted into the result clause and any indicative verb must be changed to the past tense. If there is speculation involved, then the condition clause can also have бы added to it and the verb changed to the past tense.

Калі ён здаровы, ён мог бы працаваць.	*If he is healthy, he might be able to work.*
Калі б ён быў здаровы, то мог бы працаваць.	*If he were healthy, then he might be able to work.*
Калі ён ведаў, ён не пайшоў бы.	*If he knew, he might not have gone.*
Калі б ён ведаў, то не пайшоў бы.	*If he had not known, he might not have gone.*

Chapter 29

Adverbs

29.1 Adverbs formed from adjectives

Most adverbs are formed by removing the final –**ы** or –**і** from the adjective and adding -**а** to the ending. If the stress in the adjective falls on the last or next to the last syllable, it shifts to the first syllable for the adverb.

блізкі	*close*	блізка	*closely*
важны	*important*	важна	*importantly*
вясёлы	*happy*	весела	*happily*
дакладны	*precise*	дакладна	*precisely*
ранні	*early*	ранна	*early*
ціхі	*quiet*	ціха	*quietly*

29.2 Compound adverbs

These adverbs are formed by adding 'па-' to the front of the adjective. When certain possesive adjectives are formed from animate nouns, they can be made into adverbs indicating similarity of behavior to the animate noun.

дзіцячы	*child's*	па-дзіцячы	*childishly*
воўчы	*wolf's*	па-воўчы	*like a wolf*

Ordinal numbers form adverbs by declining the adjective for the nominative neuter case and adding the prefix.

першы	*first*	па-першае	*firstly*
другі	*second*	па-другое	*secondly*
трэці	*third*	па-трэцяе	*thirdly*

Some adjectives, especially ones denoting language or nationality, form an adverb by appending the prefix and changing the final -і to an –**у**.

беларускі	*Belarusian*	па-беларуску	*in Belarusian*
брацкі	*brother's*	па-брацку	*like a brother*
англійскі	*English*	па-англійску	*in English*

29.3 The adverbs болей, меней, больш and менш

The adverbs болей and больш mean *more*, and меней and меньш mean *less*. See **6.4** for more on the usage of these adverbs.

Сястры ён болей не ўбачыць.	*He will not see his sister anymore.*
Куды болей за іх баяўся Ізяслаў свайго народа.	*Izyaslau feared his own people much more than them.*
У жыцці, аднак, усё сталася болей складана і меней шчасліва.	*In life, however, everything became more complicated and less happy.*
Кожны з якіх збіў больш за 100 нашых самалётаў.	*Each of which destroyed more than 100 of our planes.*
Я памкнуўся бліжэй, і Франі больш не пабачыў.	*I strove closer, and I did not see Franya any more.*
Яна, тым не менш, таіла ў сабе неразгаданую загадку.	*She nevertheless concealed within herself an unsolved riddle.*
Ён пачаў менш успамінаць былое.	*He started to remember the past less.*

29.4 Comparative and superlative adverbs

There are two ways to form the comparative and two ways to form the superlative form of an adverb. The short comparative form is the more common of the two. It is identical to the short comparative adjective. Section **6.1** covers its formation thoroughly. Not all adverbs have a short comparative form, but all adverbs can also form a comparative by preceding the adverb with болей or больш.

На вайне куды болей патрэбна такая вось дужасць.	*In war, such strengh is needed much more.*
Рабілася ўсё болей сцюдзёна на гэтым ветраным узлеску.	*It became much colder at this windy forest edge.*
«Размова пра паходы скочана» сказаў больш лагодна	*"All talk of the march is finished" he said more good-naturedly.*
Гэта ідэя будзе больш выгадна.	*This idea will be more profitable.*

There are two ways of forming the superlative adverb. The first is to precede the adverb with either найбольш, *most*. The second way is to follow the adverb by the phrase за ўсё or за ўсіх.

Нас маглі накіраваць куды заўгодна, але найбольш верагодна – у стралковы батальён.	*They could place us wherever is convenient, but most likely, it will be into a rifle battalion.*
Але найбольш зацята я не хацеў стаць кампазітарам.	*But most stubbornly, I did not want to become a composer.*
Але болей за ўсё яму дакучала адчуванне голаду.	*But mostly, he felt cravings of hunger.*
Болей за ўсё верагодна, што ён адчуў непажаданую пэрспэктыву адзіноты.	*It was most likely that he felt the unwanted perspective of loneliness.*

29.5 Miscellaneous adverbs

There are many important adverbs which are not derived from adjectives. A few of them are listed here.

дзе	*where*	куды	*to where*
тут	*here*	сюды	*to here*
там	*there*	туды	*to there*
нідзе	*nowhere*	нікуды	*not to anywhere*
усюды	*everywhere*		
		адкуль	*from where*
дома	*at home*	адсюль	*from here*
дадому	*to home*	адтуль	*from there*
		ніадкуль	*not from anywhere*
калі	*when*		
цяпер	*now*	сёння	*today*
зараз	*right now*	заўтра	*tomorrow*
тады	*then*	учора	*yesterday*
ніколі	*never*		
заўсёды	*always*	вельмі	*very*
		зноў	*again*
як	*how*	ледзь	*barely*
так	*so/that way*	надта	*signficantly*
неяк	*some way*	крыху	*a little*
ніяк	*no way*	шмат	*a lot*
		многа	*much/many*

Chapter 30

Conjuctions and Particles

30.1 Coordinating conjuctions

Coordinating conjunctions join two different phrases into one sentence.

і	*and*		
		Ён прыехаў і адразу пачаў працаваць	*He arrived and immediately began to work.*
	both		
		Мне падабаюцца і клубніцы і маліны.	*I like both strawberries and raspberries.*
а	*and* (contrasting)		
		Ты школьнік, а ён студэнт.	*You are in grade school, and he is in college.*
	but		
		Ён паехаў, а я засталася.	*He went, but I stayed behind.*
аднак	*although*		
		Гэта не зусім лагічна, аднак значна больш нелагічна быў яго наступны ўчынак.	*This was not completely logical, although his next action was much more logical.*
але	*but*		
		Галоўнай іх сілай былі гранаты, але кідаць іх было яшчэ далёка.	*Their main weapon was grenades, but it was still a long way to throw them.*
ды	*and*		
		Каму-ж, калі не ім, па фэстах валачыцца, ды з бяднейшых пакепліваць?	*Who, if not they, should wander around the festival and make fun of poor people?*
	but		
		Людзі паміралі, ды не спынялі барацьбы.	*People died, but they did not stop the fighting.*

ці *or*

Ці рана, ці позна, ці зусім не прыйдзе. — *Either sooner, or later, or he will not come at all.*

таксама *also*

Дзеці працавалі таксама як і дарослія. — *The children worked also, just like the adults.*

то *both*

Гэта ідзе то ўверх, то ўніз. — *It goes both up and down.*

See Chapter 28 for examples of то as a conditional conjunction.

30.2 Subordinating conjuctions

Subordinating conjuctions join a clause to another clause that it depends on.

бо *because*

Хадзем шпарчэй, бо спознімся. — *Let's walk faster, because we are going to be late.*

каб *so that*

Ён хоча, каб яго сын быў лекарам. — *He wants his son to be a doctor.*

30.3 Predicates

When these are used, the sentence will not have a noun in the nominative case as a subject. Often they are used in combination with the dative case.

можна *one may*

Гэта можна зрабіць за два дні. — *This can get done in two days.*

нельга *one must not*

Нельга хадзіць па газонах. — *No walking on the grass.*

one cannot

Чалавеку нельга жыць без любові. — *Man cannot live without love.*

няма *there is none*

У мяне няма грошай. — *I do not have any money.*

трэба *it is necessary*

На кожны стрэл трэба было брацць дазвол камадзіра — *For each shot, they needed to get the commander's permission.*

шкада *it is sad*

Шкада, што тое да мяне яшчэ не дайшло. — *It is sad that it still has not come to me.*

30.4 Suffixes

There are suffixes that can be attached to any interrogative pronoun or adverb. Doing this is equivalant to appending "some" to the beginning of an interrogative pronoun or adverb in English.

-небудзь

Што-небудзь тлумачыць я не меў сілы. — *This was something that I did not have the strength to explain.*

-сьці

Ён яшчэ дадаў пра злачыннасць тае вайны, за якую калісьці прыйдзецца некаму адказваць. — *He again thought about the crimes of that war, for which sometime, someone would have to answer.*

30.5 Other particles

але *yes*

Але, я вас разумею. — *Yes, I understand you.*

абы *if only*

Абы яна пазваніла... — *If only she would call...*

just

Хачу забіць яго, абы ціха было. — *I want to kill him, just so it would be quiet.*

жа [adds emphasis]

Ён жа вярнуўся тайком, без дазволу. — *He returned secretly, without permission.*

так	*yes*		
		Так, але... У чым я магу вам памагчы?	*Yes, but... What can I help you with?*
	so		
		Так думаў я.	*I thought so.*
	so [adds emphasis]		
		Бо іх ужо так шмат на тым баку.	*Because there is already so many of them on that side.*
ці	[indicates question]		
		Ці размаўляеш па-беларуску?	*Do you speak Belarusian?*

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